THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

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18 CHILDREN AMONG 22 KILLED IN ISRAELI STRIKES ON RAFAH

Two separate overnight attacks on the southern Gaza city came even as the US approved billions of dollars of additional military aid to Israel

ATTACKS CONTINUE AMID CALLS FOR RESTRAINT

Despite international calls for restraint, Israel is continuing its near-daily air raids on Rafah, where more than half of Gaza's population of 2.3 million has sought refuge from fighting elsewhere. A man, his wife and their 3-year-old child were killed in one of the strikes overnight on Saturday. Another attack killed 17 children and two women as per hospital records

U.S. WEIGHS SANCTIONS AGAINST IDF UNIT

- In West Bank, Israeli troops killed two teenagers on Sunday after they allegedly attacked a checkpoint with knife and gun
- The US, which is Israel's principal backer, is mulling sanctions on a unit of the Israeli army over human rights abuses in the West Bank, a move that could widen the schism between the two allies | P11

$26 BN

SIZE OF MILITARY AID TO ISRAEL CLEARED BY THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

Jailed leaders take centre stage at Oppn rally

Kejriwal, Soren's messages read out at Ranchi rally; will throw BJP out of power, say I.N.D.I.A leaders

MUKESH RANJAN @Ranchi

THE leaders of the Opposition-led INDIA bloc on Sunday said that democracy in India is in danger and that the BJP should be thrown out of power to save the country. Holding a mega rally in Jharkhand's capital Ranchi in a show of strength ahead of the remaining phases of Lok Sabha polls, the leaders lashed out at BJP for "converting ED and CBI its extended department" and oppressing opposition leaders.

Leaders from 28 parties took part in the 'Ulgulan Nyay Rally' but Congress leader Rahul Gandhi did not attend the event due to ill health. In his speech, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said Modi keeps saying that his government made a tribal the President of the country. "You (Modi) have done this not for the welfare of the tribals, but for the vote bank. You did not give jobs to the poor. You had talked about providing jobs to the youth, but this did not happen.... there was talk of doubling the income of farmers, but it also did not happen," said Kharge. Notably, two empty chairs were kept on the stage for two jailed leaders—Arvind Kejriwal of the Aam Aadmi Party and Hemant Soren of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha. Their spouses read out their messages.

Leaders of Opposition INDIA bloc hold hands during 'Ulgulan Nyay Rally' in Ranchi on Sunday | PTI

Reading out Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's message, his wife Sunita Kejriwal said INDIA bloc is seeking votes to make the country better. "Arvind ji is a very brave. He is like a lion. The only thing he has in his mind is how to make lives of this country better," she said.

She also listed out the six guarantees including free electricity to the poor, government schools in every village to provide free education, multispecialty hospitals in every district, and fair prices for farmers. "If you give a chance to INDI Alliance, then we will make this country better and stronger," she added.

Reading out Hemant Soren's message, Kalpana Soren alleged central agencies such as the ED and CBI are being misused to suppress the opposition's voice.

Will repeal CAA if voted to power: Chidambaram

CYNTHIA CHANDRAN & PREETHA NAIR @ T'puram/New Delhi

A day after Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan attacked the Congress for being silent on the CAA in its manifesto, the party switched to a damage-control mode on Sunday, with senior leader P Chidambaram asserting that the controversial law will be repealed if INDIA bloc wins power.

Clarifying the party's stand, the former Union minister said, "I have a list with me, of a large number of laws, in which we have mentioned that five laws would be repealed. One of the five laws is CAA. Why we dropped the list in the manifesto is because it was already too long. This manifesto is 46 pages and it is a long list of 40 to 50 laws. I am the chairman of the manifesto committee, take it from me. CAA will be repealed."

Speaking to reporters in Thiruvananthapuram, Chidambaram added, "We will repeal, amend, and review the following sets of laws— CAA 2019 is at the top of the list."

TNIE had reported though 'repealing and amending of CAA' figured in the original draft of the Congress manifesto, the top leadership of the party decided to drop any mention of it in the document. Instead, the manifesto said it would repeal all anti-people laws passed by the NDA without referring to CAA.

'Cong selling lies on Constitution to scare voters'

RAJESH ASNANI @ Jaipur

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday tore into the Congress party saying it is trying to instill fear among the Dalits, tribals and minorities by spreading lies about the future of India's democracy, the constitution and reservation.

"The Congress sells fear, hunger and corruption in its shop," Modi said addressing a rally in Rajasthan's Banswara. "But the country is no longer in the grip of fear. That is why their lies are no longer working," he added.

He went on to say that if the Opposition won the election, it would redistribute the wealth of people to Muslims and cited former prime minister Manmohan Singh's remark that the minority community had the first claim on the country's resources. "This urban-naxal mindset, my mothers and sisters, they will not even leave your *Mangalsutra*. They can go to that level," Modi said.

Narendra Modi addresses a public event in Jalore, Rajasthan on Sunday | PTI

Earlier, speaking at Jalore, Modi charged that Congress leaders exploited the country and they cannot be entrusted with leading the nation once again.

The prime minister said the grand old party can only blame itself for its current predicament. "They ruled for 60 years, yet left our mothers and sisters longing for basic amenities like toilets, gas, electricity, and bank accounts. Their legacy of nepotism and corruption has weakened the nation, and they are now facing the consequences," he said.

POLL CODE VIOLATION

IT dept clears ₹2 cr seized, CEO files case against BJP worker

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

A DAY after Rs 2 crore was recovered from a vehicle by the SST team, election officials on Sunday filed a case against a BJP worker after seeking permission from the court and Election Commission of India.

The SST team of Chamarajpet, Benagluru, on April 20, had intercepted a car carrying Rs 2 crore cash at 4.05 pm. The vehicle was seized and the income tax officials were alerted. The IT team verified the documents and summoned BJP office-bearers and concluded that there was no violation under IT laws.

In the meantime, officials from the Chief Electoral Officer, Karnataka, had intimated the Election Commission of India, as per procedure. "As per ECI directions cash of over Rs 10,000 given to party functionaries, candidates or agents for political activities should be done through cheques or online mode. ECI has also advised political parties not to carry huge amounts of cash.

As there is a violation of ECI directions and as the recipients' list was not produced, the FIR has been filed, based on suspicion that money may be used for inducement in elections," said an official release from CEO.

The FIR has been filed under Section 123 of the Representation of People's Act and 171 (B), (C), (E) and (F) of IPC related to bribery and undue influence.

The media release from the CEO's office also stated, "Court permission was obtained for booking the FIR at 11 am on April 21 against Lokesh Ambekallu, Secretary, BJP state office, Venkatesh Prasad (driver) and Gangadhar (accompany) by SST of 168-Chamarajpet Assembly Constituency of Bangalore Central Parliamentary Constituency at Cottonpet."

As per the FIR, a copy of which is with *The New Indian Express,* the SST team had intercepted a vehicle (KA-09-MB-2412) and found two bags containing cash.

There were two persons in the car -- Venkatesh Prasad and Gangadhar. When questioned, they admitted that the money was being taken for BJP and produced a letter of the political party dated April 20. CONTINUED ON: P4

CM: Educated youth think Modi unfit

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kolar

"EDUCATED youth have decided that Narendra Modi is nalayak (unfit) as Prime Minister. Will you vote for such a person? After being elected for 10 years, he did not get anything for the country, but is asking for your votes again this time. Does BJP have the moral authority to ask for votes again," asked Chief Minister Siddaramaiah at a public rally at Sidlaghatta, falling under the Kolar Lok Sabha constituency, on Sunday. "Modi suggested that unemployed youth should sell pakodas. P4

28,000 teens got pregnant in 2023, CM for task force

PURAN CHOUDHARY @Bengaluru

CHIEF Minister Siddaramaiah has instructed officials to constitute a 'central task force', given the alarming number of teen pregnancies in Karnataka. According to the Central government's Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) portal, 28,657 cases of underage girls (below 18 years) getting pregnant were reported in the state between January and November 2023.

Taking cognisance, Siddaramaiah on April 15, 2024 issued a letter to seven departments — Women and Child Development, Health and Family Welfare, Primary and Secondary Education, Social Welfare, Backward and Minority Welfare, Department of Tribal Welfare and Home, instructing them to prevent such cases. He also said the morale of these young women should be raised by involving senior officials to be a part of the task force. CONTINUED ON: P5

EXPRESS READ

Muizzu's party wins landslide in Maldives

Male: The party of Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu won control of parliament in a Sunday election landslide, results showed, with voters backing his tilt towards China and away from regional powerhouse and traditional benefactor India. Muizzu's People's National Congress (PNC) won 66 of the first 86 seats declared.

Kohli furious over controversial dismissal

New Delhi: Virat Kohli had a heated argument with on-field umpires after his controversial dismissal during the IPL match between RCB and KKR on Sunday. In the third over of the RCB innings, Kohli mishit a full-toss from Harshit Rana straight back to the bowler. He thought it was above waist and hence a no-ball, but the third umpire thought otherwise | P13

Six of family drown in Kali river near Dandeli

Dandeli (Uttara Kannada): Six persons of a family drowned in Kali river on Sunday. They were trying to rescue a six-year-old girl who had slipped into the river at Akhoda village in Joida taluk. All the six bodies, including that of the girl, were fished out later in the evening. The deceased were from Ishwar Nagar in Hubballi | P5

Nandini to sponsor Scotland, Ireland teams

PURAN CHOUDHARY @ Bengaluru

THE 'Nandini logo' will now be seen on the jerseys of Scotland and Ireland cricket teams in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup, to be played in the United States of America and West Indies from June 1 to 29.

Under the Karnataka Milk Federation (KMF) -- a dairy cooperative owned by the state, Nandini, a household name with its various dairy products used by lakhs, aims to acquire a global image by sponsoring the two teams.

During the tournament, the brand is also looking to launch a whey-based energy drink 'Nandini Splash' in the US in different flavours such as orange, litchi, lemon and mango. The cooperative sees the tournament, co-hosted by the West Indies and USA, as a good opportunity to increase its revenue and customer base. The brand name and logo will appear on the lead arm of the jerseys of the players. The cooperative will also run social media campaigns to promote itself in association with the teams.

KMF Managing Director KM Jagadish said, "Cricket is a much-loved sport and this sponsorship aims to reach the Indian diaspora in the global markets, making Nandinia brand across many countries. This will be a great moment for Kannadigas as a home-grown brand becomes a global one." Asked why the Indian cricket team was not sponsored, he said the costs are too high and "KMF won't be able to offer such large amounts." P5

Gehlot Jr strives for a win to shed born identity

RAJESH ASNANI @ Jaipur

AMONG the most keenly watched Lok Sabha contests in Rajasthan is the one at Jalore-Sirohi, since former chief minister Ashok Gehlot's son Vaibhav is in the fray against Lumbaram Chaudhary of the BJP.

SHOWTIME FOR GLADIATORS

Vaibhav had lost the 2019 general elections from Jodhpur to BJP's Gajendra Singh Shekhawat. The legacy of three-time Congress chief minister Ashok Gehlot, who has never lost an election, looms large over Vaibhav's campaign.

The younger Gehlot is striving to carve out his own identity, emphasising his contributions to the Youth Congress and his active involvement in Jodhpur's political landscape.

However, Vaibhav's journey has not been without controversies. He has been under the Enforcement Directorate's scrutiny over alleged foreign exchange violations related to Triton Hotels and Resorts Pvt Ltd and Vardha Enterprises Pvt Ltd, which surfaced just before the 2023 Assembly elections.

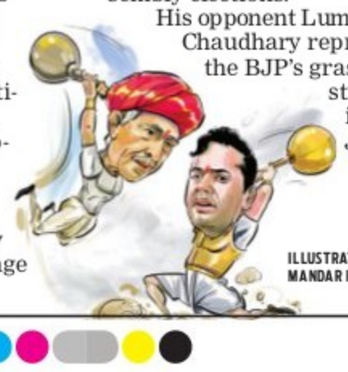
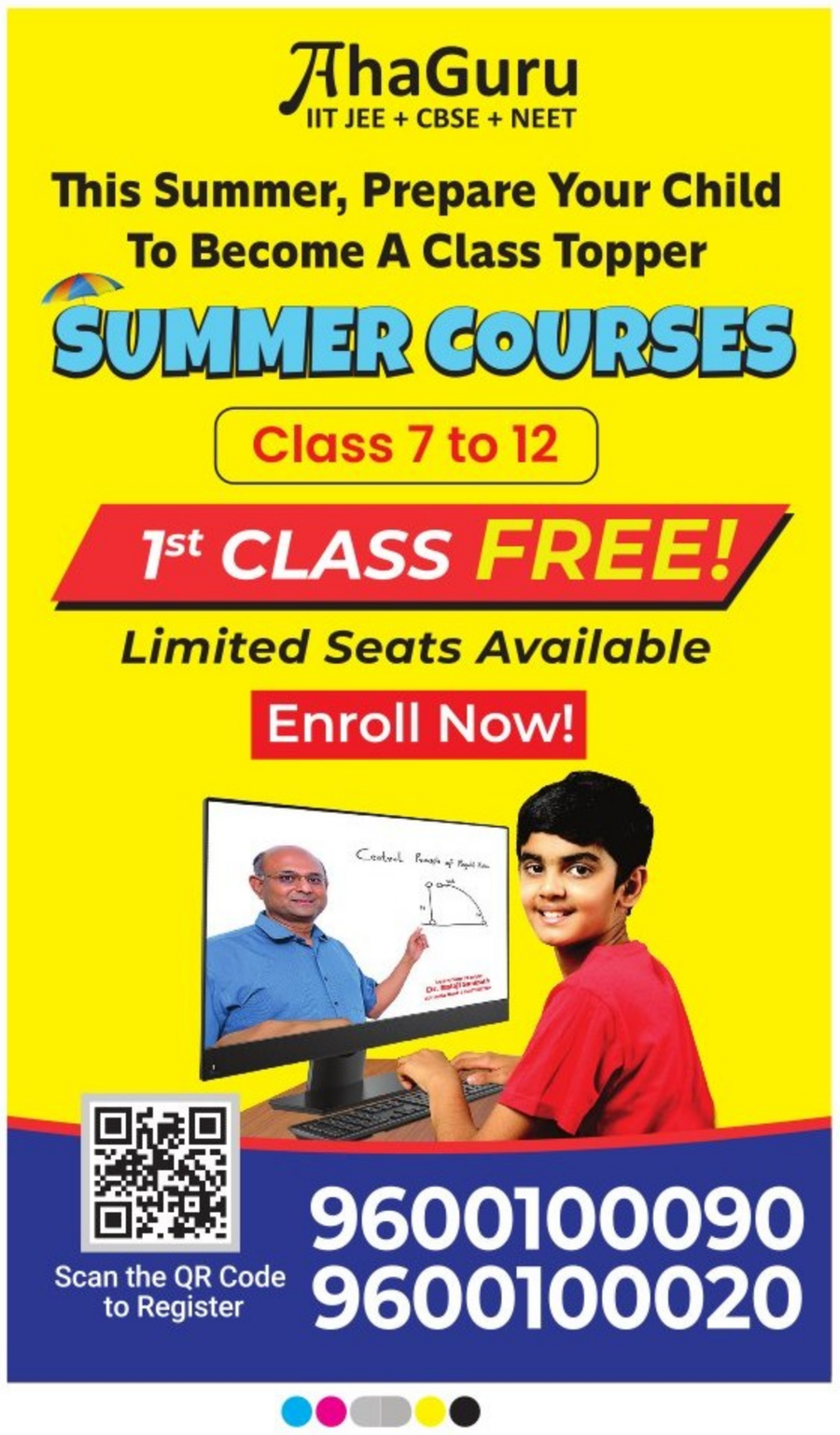


ILLUSTRATION: MANDAR PARDIKAR

His opponent Lumbaram Chaudhary represents the BJP's grassroots strength in the Jalore-Sirohi region.

With a history of active participation in party activities, Chaudhary earned his stripes through hard work and dedication. His tenure as the pradhan of the Sirohi Panchayat Samiti and his leadership roles in the Sirohi BJP unit strengthened his local appeal.

Despite being overlooked in the previous assembly elections, his commitment finally paid off with the Lok Sabha ticket after the BJP dropped its sitting MP Devji Patel. CONTINUED ON: P9



ALMANAC TODAY
• **Monday:** 22.04.2024 • **Year:** Shobhakruta • **Ayana:** Uttharayana
• **Ritu:** Vasantha • **Masa:** Chaitra • **Paksha:** Shukla • **Tithi:** Chaturdasi 2.24 am
• **Nakshatra:** Hastha 7.19 pm • Moon in Tula Rashi • **Rahukaala:** 07:30 am to 09:00 am
• **Gulikakala:** 01:30 pm to 03:00 pm • **Yamaganda:** 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

WEATHER | MIN 23°C | MAX 37°C | **FORECAST** Partly cloudy

Sunrise 06.03 am | Sunset 06.33 pm | Moonrise 05.21 pm | Moonset 04.51 am

BMRCL CLOCKS HIGHEST EVER PROFIT OF ₹130 CR

Better connectivity and increased ridership resulted in profits

S LALITHA @Bengaluru

FOR the second consecutive financial year, the Bangalore Metro Rail Network Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has clocked operational profits. It has touched Rs 129.3 crore for the fiscal 2023-2024, the highest ever, said Metro sources sharing the provisional figures readied by them. It has also clocked a ridership figure of 23.28 crore during the period on its network which now stretches to 73.8 km.

A senior Metro official said, "The revenues are in line with what we had anticipated. Our income through fares stands at Rs 735.48 crore while our expenditure stands at Rs 606.18 crore, thereby making us surplus on the operational front."

Any new line will contribute to increased ridership. The establishing of the crucial link between KR Pura and Baiyappanahalli stations as well as the extension to Challaghatta on the Purple Line on October 9, 2023 has contributed to this operational surplus."

Comparatively, the fiscal 2022-2023 had a ridership of 17.72 crore and an operational surplus of Rs 108 crore as our income stood at Rs 594.01 crore only. "It is still a fantastic achievement for us considering the previous fiscal of 2021-2022, when our revenue was just Rs 228.76 crore while our expenditure stood at 345.6 crore which made us incur a loss of Rs 118 crore. The trend towards self-sufficiency in operations has been clearly established and this augurs well for BMRCL."

Executive director, Operations and Maintenance, BMRCL, A S Shankar, "The results of the fiscal are very promising for us. It shows public are moving towards Metro travel as we had anticipated. The support given by BMTC in increasing its feeder services across our stations multifold too have contributed to it. By December this year, when the R V Road-Bommasandra Line gets launched, the ridership will surge and so will our earnings."

Chief Public Relations Officer, BMRCL, B L Yashavanth Chavan said the average ridership per day during the just concluded financial year stood at 6.36 lakh. Asked about the impact of the connectivity to K R Pura, he said the average boarding figure on the Baiyappanahalli to Whitefield (Kadugodi) stood at 1.05 lakh daily. Baiyappanahalli is no longer a hub for passengers."

Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Interchange station remains the top station in terms of footfalls while Benniganahalli is now the second busiest station. Indira Nagar and Nagasandra jointly occupy the third position, he added.

RIDERSHIP SPIKE

BMRCL is finally inching towards the 8 lakh per day ridership figure and has done it twice this week. "We had a ridership figure of 7,96,577 on Thursday (April 18) due to the CET exam candidates opting to take a Metro ride," Shankar said. On April 15, its ridership stood at 7,92,505 due to an IPL match and extension in timings. The only time it breached 8 lakh was on August 15, 2022, due to a Congress rally and Independence Day Flower show at Lal Bagh when it had 8,25,190 riders.

BENGALURU 2050

Service plan, not master plan to solve city's issues, say experts

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

A FIVE-element seminar on sustainable urban ecology - 'Bengaluru 2050' was conducted by Rotary International districts 3191 and 3192 in association with Sycom Global, a services marketplace and Indian Green Building Council, known for developing green buildings at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) on Sunday.

During the discussion "The missing master plan," experts highlighted urban planning and development challenges, citing the lack of a comprehensive master plan, fragmented decision-making, and unsustainable growth as factors contributing to Bengaluru's transformation from a garden city to a concrete jungle.

Naresh Narasimhan, architect and urbanist, said that Bengaluru's urban planning process has been ineffective in addressing the city's water scarcity and the planning laws are outdated and inadequate for its rapidly growing population. "Not a master plan, but a service plan is required to solve environment concerns in the city's metropolitan region," he said.

The plan should emphasize expanding urban development into neighbouring areas like Hoskote, Ramanagara, Kanakapura, Nelamangala, and Anekal to expand the city's area. Instead of adopting a strictly western-centric Central Business District (CBD) model, where a certain part is surrounded by high-rise buildings followed by suburban areas, alternative approaches should be explored, Naresh explained.

Naresh mentioned that the issue arises from lack of alignment between authorities such as BBMP, BDA, and BWSSB, each pursuing their own agendas without cohesive city-wide planning. This fragmentation results in disparate projects that fail to contribute to a unified vision for the city's future.

Stressing the triple planetary crisis - climate change, biodiversity collapse, and air pollution, Dr Harini Nagendra, Director of the Research Centre at Azim Premji University highlighted the interconnectedness of ecological security, climate change, and air pollution which further impacts food security. Dr Harini, who also leads the university's centre for climate change and sustainability, emphasized the importance of considering the needs of marginalized communities in urban ecology.

Highlighting air pollution, Dr Harini emphasized the importance of planting more trees in urban areas to improve resilience to climate change.

'Up tax for car ownership to reduce traffic'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

BUILDING good infrastructure, increasing public transportation networks, improving cycling and pedestrian infrastructure, levying additional tax on the purchase of new vehicles and improving policy on electric vehicles were some of the major measures recommended by Indian Institute of Science (IISc) mobility expert Ashish Verma.

He made these suggestions in his presentation titled 'Manage Commute-2050', one of the five-element seminars on sustainability urban ecology during the 'Bengaluru 2050-Dialogues on Sustainability'. The programme was organised by Rotary international districts 3191 and 3192 in association with Sycon Global at IISc on Sunday.

He said excessive car ownership leads to high traffic congestion. Comparing data of other high GDP nations like the USA and Japan, where there are 600-800 cars per 1,000 population, he noted that India's car ownership stands at 25 cars per 1,000 population and in Bengaluru specifically, 200 cars per 1,000 population, significantly lower than in wealthier economies. "India's economy is growing. However, we need to address the issue of increasing car ownership, which can lead to severe traffic congestion. As the economy grows, car ownership tends to increase. We must reconsider car policies and promote the use of public transportation, and walking infrastructure, strict rules on banning single-person car usage and imposing higher taxes on cars as they can help prevent excessive car ownership," Verma said

Flag hoisted, rallies held for voter turnout

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

TO create awareness on the importance of voting and to increase the turnout, officials from the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Karnataka, and District Returning Officer and BBMP Chief Commissioner, Tushar Girinath, launched and hoisted a flag on Sunday to urge voters to exercise their franchise and inform them of their nearest polling booth.

CEO, Karnataka, Manoj Kumar Meena, said the flag was first introduced during the 2023 Assembly elections to inform people of their nearest polling booth. This is the first time it has been introduced for Lok Sabha elections. The flag has the date of polling for the first phase of elections (April 26) in Karnataka, and it also tells people where the nearest polling booth is. A vintage car and bike rally was also held in the city to create awareness about voting. It was flagged off by Karnataka Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot from Raj Bhavan on Sunday.

Speaking on the sidelines of the event, the Governor urged people to vote. He said voting is the right of people in a democracy, and it empowers people. "In the interest of democracy, it is necessary to vote. I request all citizens to vote," the Governor added.

The rally passed through Infantry Road, Queen's Circle, Anil Kumble Circle, Trinity Circle, Siddalingaiah Circle.

FESTIVITY IN THE AIR

Jains perform a dance on the occasion of the 263rd Janm Kalyanak Mahotsav of Bhagwan Mahaveer in Bengaluru | NAGARAJ GADEKAL

BCU SEEKS APPLICATIONS FOR 3RD ANNUAL CONVOCATION

Bengaluru City University invited applications from undergraduate, postgraduate, B.Ed, and B.P.Ed candidates who completed their examinations in January 2024 from affiliated and autonomous colleges and universities, to award them their degree certificates at the third annual convocation. Candidates who are yet to apply for the degree certificates but have passed the UG, PG, B.Ed, or B.P.Ed exams as of January 2024 can submit their online applications on or before May 24. Information regarding the same is available on the university website - https://www.bcu.ac.in/

Human chain formed to create voter awareness

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

TO create awareness among voters to cast their votes in the Lok Sabha elections on April 26, a human chain was formed at Jakkur Circle here on Sunday. An awareness song was also sung as part of the 'Namma Nade Matagatteya Kade' (Our step is towards the polling booth) campaign led by the Election Commission and the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP).

Students along with the BBMP staff and Chief Electoral Officer Manoj Kumar Meena, District Election Officer and BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Girinath took part in a walkathon and distributed pamphlets, encouraging people to take part in the elections and cast their votes. Beside, a vehicle mounted with a LED screen, playing election awareness songs emphasised the importance of exercising one's rights on the day of voting.

Citizens were also made aware of voter helpline-1950 including the C-Vigil app, KYC, and Saksham app and were briefed on the steps to check their names on the voter list. Officials visited the seven polling stations that will come in the premise of Government Model Primary School at Jakkur and directed the concerned to ensure that all the facilities are put in place so that people can come and cast their votes without any inconvenience.

Governor flags off vintage car and bike rally to create voter awareness

Karnataka Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot flagged off a vintage car and bike rally from Raj Bhavan on Sunday to create awareness among voters. Gehlot emphasized the significance of India's status as the world's largest democracy, highlighting the crucial role of voters and electoral stakeholders in fortifying the democratic framework. "Voting is not just a right but a duty that fortifies our nation and its democratic principles." He urged citizens to exercise their franchise diligently, emphasizing that each vote contributes to the strength and resilience of the republic.

Daily Starscope

PETER VIDAL

22nd April: The current planetary pattern is truly spectacular. In fact, it's the most expansive, optimistic and imaginative alignment around. If there's anything you ever wanted to do but didn't, then do it! However, we should all steer clear of the major pitfalls - recklessness and complacency.

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr. 20)
A change in your emotional perspective might be a result of fresh informa-tion, perhaps the realisa-tion that somebody's intentions were misunders-tood. You must also make more of an effort to understand the way other people are feeling. The end result, within a few weeks' time, may be a new and very valuable long-term friendship.

TAURUS (Apr. 21 - May 21)
Your solar chart is beginning to look considerably more relaxed, which means that if you have any lingering problems to cope with, they will be caused by yesterday's questions and difficulties, rather than today's. Mind you, you've got to keep a clear head.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
Although you've been cracking along at a fair old pace recently, it will soon be time to take stock, and perhaps go over old ground again. Stay alert and keep an eye on fortune's subtle ebb and flow. Opportunities will come and go, but you'll have to be quick off the mark.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
Domestic affairs matter most at the moment. This could be an extremely useful period to get in touch with family members you've not seen for some time. And it's certainly a good moment to see that all your favourite ambitions are based on firm foundations.

LEO (July 24 - Aug. 23)
It's a day for taking choices, although whether you are truly in any state to make important long-term decisions is another matter! You can make your mind up, but following your intentions through may not be so simple. If current issues focus around money, and how to get more of it, you're probably on the right track.

VIRGO (Aug. 24 - Sept. 23)
You are entering what can only be described as a more settled period for affairs of the heart. The question is whether recent opportunities on the field of romance can be followed up, or are to be left on the scrap-heap of history. The truth may emerge after another few days have passed.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 - Oct. 23)
Emotional confidence is returning, but the planets advise a small dose of caution. It may be difficult to practise restraint, but you'll know when the moment is right to hold back. It's all a matter of trusting your instincts, although that's not an easy thing at the best of times.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22)
You can afford to keep your intentions and feelings to yourself for a little while longer. The question, though, is whether, when the moment does come to reveal all, you will be able to choose the time and the place. If you can, all well and good.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 - Dec. 22)
You are often torn between a sociable desire to involve other people in your affairs on the one hand, and a strangely solitary urge to go off and do your own thing on the other. Although the latter is very important over the next few months, the former should take precedence today.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 23 - Jan. 20)
The overall picture now becomes very much more certain, and, to your relief, less confused. The message of the mo-ment is a rather profound one: it's not what's true that counts as much as what you believe to be true. You'd also do well to give others the benefit of the doubt, at least until they've had time to explain themselves.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 - Feb. 19)
The past month seems to have coincided with a time of flared passions and tense situations, often over matters which could easily have been avoided. If professional ambitions have been disturbed you'll soon find it easy to make up. Private disputes require a little more attention, though.

PISCES (Feb. 20 - Mar 20)
You are no doubt highly stressed. Mars, the planet responsible, has a little way to go before it leaves you alone, but you may now get ready to turn the tables on the person - or thing - responsible for winding you up. Also, do yourself a favour and stop making excuses for not tackling adventurous tasks.

Solutions to Yesterday's puzzle

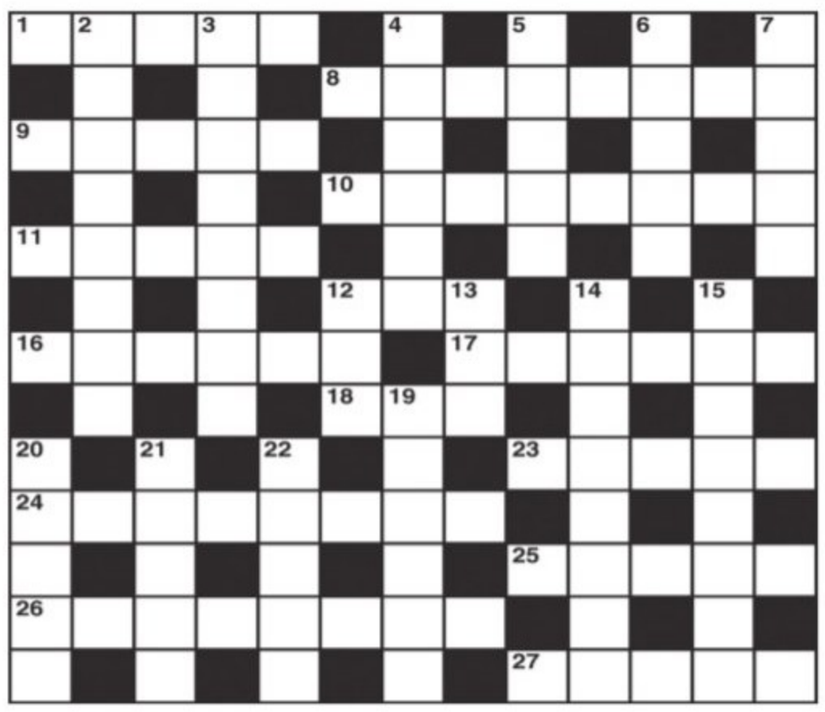
		2	8			4		
5			1					
		8			3			5
		5		4			9	1
6	9						8	4
4	8			9		3		
1			3			7		
					6			9
		4			5	1		

7	5	2	3	8	9	1	6	4
6	3	1	7	4	2	8	5	9
4	8	9	1	5	6	2	3	7
3	9	7	6	1	5	4	8	2
5	2	8	4	9	3	6	7	1
1	6	4	2	7	8	5	9	3
2	7	6	5	3	1	9	4	8
9	1	3	8	6	4	7	2	5
8	4	5	9	2	7	3	1	6

SUDOKU HARD

TEST YOUR NUMBER CRUNCHING SKILL WITH OUR UNIQUE PUZZLE

Fill in the grid with digits in such a manner that every row, every column and every 3 X 3 box accommodates the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



CROSS WORD

ACROSS
1 An important point that's taken for granted (5)
8 Be without a servant; result of a blow perhaps (5,3)
9 A job dealing with traffic (5)
10 The way the world goes round (8)
11 Lives wildly producing social problems (5)
12 It's raining in the West, not South (3)
16 Go lightly and return it to a new post (6)
17 Neural disorder is imaginary (6)
18 Assume it's not quite finished (3)
23 Vehicles of mine are coming back in fashion (5)
24 Threatening to readjust my ration (8)
25 Extreme way to speak (5)
26 Bill returns to unusually barren capital (8)
27 Come up with an increase (5)

DOWN
2 So long in France (2,6)
3 Rise and fall of one of the French recently dead (8)
4 Oral entreaties find favour (6)
5 Sharp - even when beheaded (5)
6 Elgar composition fit for a king (5)
7 Prompt about going on day shift (5)
12 United we figure (3)
13 Turn a nut in the barrel (3)
14 Comparatively timely help for the player (8)
15 Justice characteristic of the Scandinavians (8)
19 A heavenly model (6)
20 It may put to sea in a blow (5)
21 Silly Annie is upset (5)
22 A way always short and direct (5)

SATURDAY'S SOLUTIONS

Across: 1 Matchmaker, 6 Year, 10 In ter, 11 Plaintiff, 12 Foremost, 13 Evade, 15 Noisome, 17 Cheroot, 19 Octaeon, 21 Matador, 22 Total, 24 Cast iron, 27 Soap opera, 28 Somme, 29 Even, 30 Brightened.

Down: 1 Mail, 2 Tattooist, 3 Horde, 4 Approve, 5 Elastic, 7 Erica, 8 Reflectors, 9 Interest, 14 In bad taste, 16 Overlook, 18 Odd-job man, 20 Nuclear, 21 Mustang, 23 Trace, 25 Inset, 26 Bend.

JUMBLE UNSCRAMBLE THESE JUMBLES, ONE LETTER TO EACH SQUARE, TO FORM FOUR ORDINARY WORDS.

BY DAVID L. HOYT AND JEFF KNUREK

COFER

VEORP

FLARGU

VEDUTO

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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

" "

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: UNFIT OOMPH ORIGIN MARVEL
Answer: Tom Cruise could make so many "Mission Impossible" films because he — GOT ON A "ROLE"

A 42-year-old man died by suicide by jumping into a lake in Maddur taluk on Sunday. The police said Raghu, a resident of Hutagere village, had a fight with his brother. Later, he consumed liquor and jumped into the lake near Mallanakuppe village. The police and fire service personnel retrieved the body after a four-hour operation

FIRST TIP, THEN RIDE

NAMMA YATRI SLOWS DOWN AS DRIVERS WAIT FOR EXTRA CASH

Customers say maximum tip of Rs 30 earlier has increased to Rs 50

RISHITA KHANNA @Bengaluru

DAYS after the launch of Namma Yatri cab services in Bengaluru, with the promise of zero surge pricing, commuters complain that the app has slowed down auto-ride bookings, with most rides only being accepted when a tip is added. Most of the customers also highlighted that the fare option, which previously showed a maximum tip of Rs 30, has now been increased to Rs 50.

Rudra Murthy, general secretary of Auto Rickshaw Drivers' Union, told TNIE, "The other app-based taxi aggregators can charge commissions of up to 20 per cent on ride fares. However, Namma Yatri is a direct-to-driver app, which eliminates commissions and middlemen altogether." Hence, drivers wait for customers to add a tip to earn extra; when a tip is added to the base fare, drivers receive an update about the new fare and then accept the ride. Before the ride begins, drivers are informed of the fares and they decide whether to accept the ride, he added.

When *TNIE* reached out to daily users of Namma Yatri, they reported paying higher fares to book their auto rides lately. Many of them initially believed there was a technical issue with the app, as bookings were unusually slow. However, it has now become common for customers to be unable to secure an auto ride until a tip of Rs 30-50 is added, users said.

Prerna, a college student and daily user of Namma Yatri, remarked that previously, auto rides would get booked in no time through the app. However, now, right after booking, the app quickly displays a pop-up message, asking users to add tips. Auto bookings now only get confirmed when a tip of Rs 30-40 is added.

Gargi, a tax analyst, said what previously cost her Rs 110-120, now amounts to Rs 180. She highlighted, "After including the tip, auto fares skyrocket to match the cab fares recently introduced by the app. Without adding a tip, bookings are not being accepted, regardless of the time or location. Once a tip of Rs 40-50 is added, the ride gets quickly booked.

Lakshmibai, a nurse who would use Namma Yatri for her daily trips from Sandal Soap Factory metro station to Mathikere, said, "I recently discontinued using the app due to the surge in fares. It is not practical to pay an extra Rs 30-40 every day. People opted for Namma Yatri because it reliably offered prompt rides at regular rates, but the current trend of requiring an additional tip for bookings is unreasonable."

A senior Namma Yatri official said according to their data, the majority of their trips do not include added tips, and it happens only during peak hours or for short trips when drivers typically wait to accept a ride until a tip is added.

Girl burnt alive as van catches fire on NICE Rd

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

A girl was burnt alive and seven others sustained injuries when their van toppled and caught fire after an SUV rammed into it. The incident occurred on the NICE Road near Bangalore International Exhibition Centre in Madanayakanahalli on Sunday night.

The identity of the deceased, aged 15-18 years, is yet to be established while the injured are undergoing treatment at a hospital.

Police said a family of eight persons, who are said to be residents of Dasarahalli, were travelling in the van that was rammed by the SUV from the rear around 9.45 pm. Due to the impact, the van toppled and caught fire. The occupants were in the van and started screaming for help. While the public managed to pull out seven people, the fire spread and the girl was burnt alive.

Among the injured, some sustained fractures while others have burn injuries. They are said to be out of danger, the Nelamangala traffic police, who have registered a case, said.

DIVINE INTERVENTION

Muslims offer Salaat al-Istisqa, a special prayer for rain, at Neelasandra Idgah Maidan on Sunday | SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA

CRIME PATROL

Five nabbed for killing courier boy

The Halasuru police arrested five miscreants on Saturday afternoon for murdering a courier boy near the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) park in Domlur on Friday. The victim has been identified as Sathish (32), and the accused as Santhosh (36), Pavan Kumar (24), Ranjith Kumar (33), J. Vinod Mathew (25), and Ranganath (41). A case under Section 302 of the IPC has been registered against them. Deputy Commission Police (DCP) East, Kuldeep Kumar Jain, said that five accused, including Sathish, were friends. In a drunken state during a heated argument between Sathish and the others, one of the accused hit Sathish on his head with a concrete brick near BDA park in Domlur on Friday morning. ENS

Bizman losses ₹5 crore to online fraudsters

A 52-year-old businessman lost over Rs 5 crore after falling prey to online fraudsters who lured him with high returns on shares. In a complaint to the cyber crime police, the resident of 7th Block Jayanagar stated that he recently received a link on WhatsApp and ignored it. Later, he was added him to a WhatsApp group with 160 members. "The accused connected with me over a WhatsApp call and claimed that I could earn double returns if I invested in stocks through the link. Trusting them, I transferred Rs 5,17,57,500 to various bank account numbers given by them and purchased shares. When I tried to withdraw the invested money, but could not," he stated. Based on his complaint, the cyber crime police registered a case. ENS

Security guard burgles ex-mayor's house

Gold jewellery and cash worth over Rs 1.2 crore were stolen from the residence of former city mayor Narayanaswamy in RMV Second Stage in Sanjaynagar by the security guard on Thursday. The security guard is identified as Narbahadur Sahi, 35, hailing from Nepal. He had been working for the last 45 days in the former mayor's house. Police said Narayanaswamy, his wife, and son had gone to a temple in Tamil Nadu on the morning of April 18. When they returned home at night, they found the security guard missing. The locker was broken open and the jewellery and cash were missing. Narayanaswamy suspected the role of the security guard, whose phone was switched off, and filed a complaint with Sanjaynagar police. ENS

BDA'S NOTICE AGAINST ILLEGAL LAYOUT GOES MISSING

MOHAMMED YACOOB @ Bengaluru

A notice that was put up by Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) cautioning the public not to get lured and buy plots in an alleged unauthorised layout, has been allegedly removed by unidentified miscreants.

It is suspected that the builders who are developing the layout are behind the act.

According to BDA officials, the notice was put up on Wednesday, asking the public not to fall for any kind of lure, and buy plots.

"There was a complaint stating that an unauthorised layout was being developed on Survey number 19/2 of Agrahara village of Pattandur in Bengaluru East taluk of KR Puram hobli. As per Section 15 of Karnataka Town and Country Planning Act 1961, BDA had not given any permission to develop land and hence a notice was put up cautioning people who are planning to buy sites there," said a senior BDA official.

The official added that a day after putting the notice on the wall, the same mysteriously disappeared. "It looks like the handiwork of some builder mafia as they would lose customers if such notices are put up," said the official.

Earlier, the builders had obtained an injunction from court while activists and residents noted that the miscreants who are forming the illegal layout and are involved in the paying guest business, tend to misuse legal options to obtain temporary stay or injunctions to scuttle action by the authorities.

IN THE COURT OF THE HON'BLE I ADDL. CONSUMER DISPUTE REDRESSAL FORUM, AT BENGALURU (SCCH-12)
CC No. 333/ 2023
BETWEEN:
SMT. SHYLAJA COMPLAINANT
AND
HDFC ERGO INSURANCE AND ANR RESPONDENTS
NOTICE TO RESPONDENT NO.1

HDFC ERGO General Insurance Company LTD, No.21/1, 2nd Floor, Building No.2, Shankaranarayana Building, No.1, M G Road, Bangalore.
ALSO AT, 1st Floor, HDFC House, 165/166 Back Bay Reclamation, H.T. Parekh Marg, Churchgate, Mumbai-400020.

The Complainant has Filed the above Case seeking the Respondent No.1, herein to pay the balance Home Loan EMI as per the Insurance Policy dated 31.03.2019, and also compensate and repay the total sum paid by the Complainant to the Respondent No.2 Bank towards EMI of Housing Loan from the date of Death of the Insured Party.

You are hereby directed to appear before the Hon'ble Court 1st ADDL. CONSUMER DISPUTE REDRESSAL FORUM, BANGALORE on 13.05.2024, by 10.30 A.M., either in person or through your counsel to answer the claim. If you fail to appear before the Court on the said Day, either in person or through your counsel, you will be placed ex-parte and the Case will be disposed off in accordance with the Law. Given under my Hand and Seal of the Court on 18th April, 2024.

By Order of the Commission
Sd/-
Asst. Registrar-Cum-Assistant Administartive Officer, Bengaluru Rural & Bengaluru Urban 1st Addl District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission, 1st Floor, BMTC B Block, TTMC Building, K.H. Road, Shanthinagar, Bengaluru-560027.

Address of the Complainant Advocate
Yadhu Krishnan
Precinct Legal, No.43, S-2, TNT Towers, Infantry Road, Bangalore-560001.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Sale deed dated 22-11-2017 and the same is registered document No. BSK- 1-09206-2017-18 stored in CD No.BSK-D421 Registered at the Sub-Registrar of assurance Banashankari, Bangalore

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the Property known as Shed No.M-121, Present Purasabhe Katha No.627/515/P.No.M-121, situated at Industrial Estate, Jigani 1st Stage, Bangalore, standing on a Plot of land bearing No's. 15-B5, 21-C and 15-A5 of Jigani I Phase Industrial Area, situated in Sy. No's Parts of 123, 210, 130, 561 to 563, 134, 135 of Jigani Village, Jigani Hobli, Anekal Taluk, measuring East to West: (19.90 22.10)/2 Meters, and North to South: 4.15 Meters, in all measuring 87.15 Square Meters, including front and Side open space comprising of an Industrial Factory Shed standing thereon measuring 29.08 Square Meters including and bounded on: East by: Road, West by: 5th Cross Road, North by: Shed No.M-120, South by: Shed No.M-122.

VISHWANATH .S, Advocate
No.75, 1st floor, Opp Yediyur Ganesha Temple, Jayanagara, 6th Block, Bangalore-560070. Mob: 9972738987.
Date:20-04-2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Smt. K.A. Indrani W/o K. Srinivas residing at Narasapura Village, Kolar Taluk confirm resident of the above address.

We hereby declare that my client has Lost the below mentioned Original Sale deeds near LIC HFL, Yelahanka Branch on 21st April 2024.

The Document of title Original Sale deeds with respect to Site No.4, Village Panchyath Khatha No.517 measuring (30×40) feet, situated at Narasapura Village, Narasapura Gram Panchyath, Kolar Taluk, This above Original Sale Deed (Mother Deed) bearing No.1966/1990-91 dated 08/02/1991, is registered in the office of the SRO, Kolar Further Police complaint has been lodged on 21/04/2024 in Online bearing Lost Report. No.1022626/2024 to this effect which has been duly acknowledged. The above Public Notice is now issued. Any person having claim/in possession of the said document may represent to the under signed within 14 days failing which it will be taken that there are no claims.

A.Prashanth, Advocate
No.3755, SAMPRATHI, DESHADAPETE
Doddaballapur Town-561203. Mob : 9886628181.

KERALA STATE DRUGS & PHARMACEUTICALS LTD.
(A Government of Kerala Undertaking)
Kalavoor P.O, Alappuzha, Kerala - 688522,
Tel: 0477 2258184, Web: www.ksdp.co.in, E-mail: ksdprmqtn@gmail.com

E-Tenders are invited from competent Suppliers / Manufacturers for the Supply of API's, Excipients, Granules, EHG Shell, Cartons, Pet Bottles, Ropp Caps, Tinctures and Vials for the year 2024-25. Last dates of Bid Submissions are 26th April to 10th May, 2024.

Please Refer Sites http://etenders.kerala.gov.in/www.ksdp.co.in for detailed specification, terms and conditions. Any further amendment or corrigendum will be published only in the sites. Participants are advised to refer sites for necessary information on a regular basis.

(Sd/-)
Managing Director

IDFC FIRST Bank Limited
(erstwhile IDFC FIRST Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)
CIN : L65110TN2014PLC097792
Registered Office: KRM Towers, 8th Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai-600031. TEL: +91 44 4564 4000 | FAX: +91 44 4564 4022.

APPENDIX IV [Rule 8(1)]
POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property)

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile IDFC FIRST Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 07.06.2023 calling upon the borrower, co-borrowers and guarantors 1. Ganganna K V, 2. Lalitha to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs. 76,43,796/- (Rupees Seventy Six Lakh Forty Three Thousand Seven Hundred Ninety Six Only) as on 07.06.2023 within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub – section (4) of section 13 of act read with rule 8 of the security interest (enforcement) rules, 2002 on this 15th day of April 2024.

The borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the IDFC First Bank Limited (erstwhile IDFC FIRST Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) for an amount of Rs. 76,43,796/- (Rupees Seventy Six Lakh Forty Three Thousand Seven Hundred Ninety Six Only) and interest thereon.

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub – Section (8) Of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Description Of The Immovable Properties.

ITEM-1:- All That Piece And Parcel Of Property Bearing Survey Numbers 56, 57/12, 55/3, 63/1, 54, 57/2, 57/3, 57/4, 57/11, 57/13, 57/14, 57/15, 57/16, 57/17, 60, 60/1, 60/2, 53/3, 57/5, 57/6, 57/7, 58, 61/1, 63/2, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 23/2, 23/4, 27/Ic, 27/3, 28/2a, 53, 55/1, 59/1, 59/2 & 62 Of Nayandahalli Village, Kengeri Hobli, Bengaluru South Taluk Measuring 40 Acres 04.5 Guntas Land In Whicch Iti Workers Housing Co-Operative Society In Which Formed Layout In Which Site No. 385, Now The Said Proeprty Coming Udner Bbmp, Chandra Layout Sub Devision, Ward No. 131 (Old Ward No. 39), Municipal No. 385, Pid No. 39-202-385, Bangalore, Karnataka-560039, Measuring East To West 23 Feet, North To South 38 Feet, Total 874 Square Feets Site Bounded On The: East: Item No. 2 Of Same Site, West: Property Of Society, North: Property Of Society, South: Property Of Society

ITEM-2:- All That Piece And Parcel Of Site Proeprty Bearing No. 385 Measuring East To West 8+9/2 Feet, North To South 56 Feets, Total 756 Square Feets Bounded On The East By Item No:2 Of Same Site. East: Road, West: Property In Itme No. 1 Of Same Number, North: Sites In Property Number No. 384 & 383, South: Site No. 386

Sd/-
Authorised Officer
IDFC FIRST Bank Limited
(erstwhile IDFC FIRST Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)

Date: 15th April 2024
Place: Bangalore
Loan Account No: 10004140279

CITY UNION BANK LIMITED
Credit Recovery and Management Department
Administrative Office : No. 24-B, Gandhi Nagar, Kumbakonam - 612 001. E-Mail id : crmd@cityunionbank.in, Ph : 0435-2432322, Fax : 0435-2431746

RE-TENDER-CUM-AUCTION SALE NOTICE UNDER SARFAESI ACT 2002

The following property/ies mortgaged to City Union Bank Limited will be sold in Re-Tender-cum-Public Auction by the Authorised Officer of the Bank, under Rule 8 (6) & 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, under the SARFAESI Act, 2002, for recovery of a sum of Rs.66,29,266/- (Rupees Sixty Six Lakh Twenty Nine Thousand Two Hundred and Sixty Six only) as on 17-04-2024 together with further interest to be charged from 18-04-2024 onwards, other expenses and any other dues to the bank by the bank by the Borrowers / Guarantors No.1) Ms. Nagamani Perar, D/o. P. Monappa Nath, No.87/61, Maruthi Krupa, 1st Floor, East End, B Main, 9th Block, Jayanagar, Bengaluru - 560069. Also at, Ms. Nagamani Perar, D/o. P. Monappa Nath, No.2-63/1, Sunflower House, Nitte, Near Santhosh Chashew Factory, Nitte Udupi, Karnataka - 574110. No.2) Ms. Pushpavathi .P, D/o. Koragappa Purusha, No. 2-37, Sunflower House, Borgal Gudde, Attur Nitte, Karnataka, Udupi - 576101.

Immovable Property Mortgaged to our Bank
(Property Owned by Ms. Nagamani Perar, D/o. P. Monappa Nath)

All the Piece and Parcel of the Residential Apartment Bearing No. B-204, 2nd Floor, Block - B, 2 BHK, Measuring a Super Built-up Area of 1,092.44 Sq.Feet in the name and style of R F Twiling and one covered Car Parking in basement along with other amenities. And Undivided share measuring 318.01 Sq.Ft out of the 16,300 Sq.Ft. Situated at Corporation Khatha No.426/715/B/540/2/31/2, No.826/715/A/540/1/31/1 & No.32/715/540/31 amalgamated by BBMP Katha No.715/540/31/1/31/2 Situated at Kote (Fort) Kengeri, Kengeri Sub - Division, Bengaluru - 560060. Boundaries : East by : Set Back Area, West by : Staircase and Lift, North by : Flat No. B - 203. South by : Set Back Area.

Reserve Price : Rs.36,00,000/-
(Rupees Thirty Six Lakh only)

RE-AUCTION DETAILS

Date of Re-Tender-cum-Auction Sale	Venue
09-05-2024	City Union Bank Limited, Hoskote Branch, 6th Cross, Thamme Gowda (TG) Layout, Opp.Hoskote Mission Hospital & Channakeshava Petrol Bunk, Hoskote, Bengaluru Rural - 562114. Cell No.7397789907.

Terms and Conditions of Re-Tender-cum-Auction Sale :

(1) The intending bidders should be present in person for the auction and participate personally and give a declaration in writing to the effect that he/she is bidding for himself/ herself. (2) The intending bidders may obtain the Tender Forms from The Manager, City Union Bank Limited, Hoskote Branch, 6th Cross, Thamme Gowda (TG) Layout, Opp. Hoskote Mission Hospital & Channakeshava Petrol Bunk, Hoskote, Bengaluru Rural - 562114. (3) The intending bidders should submit their bids only in the Tender Form prescribed in sealed envelopes addressed to The Authorised Officer, City Union Bank Ltd., together with a Pay Order / Demand Draft for an EMD of 10% of the Reserve Price, drawn in favour of "City Union Bank Ltd.", on or before 12.00 Noon on the date of Tender-cum Auction Sale hereby notified. (4) For inspection of the property and other particulars, the intending purchaser may contact Cell No.7397789907. (5) The property/ies are sold on "As-is-where-is", "As-is-what-is" and "whatever-there is" basis. (6) The sealed tenders will be opened in the presence of the intending bidders at 01.00 p.m. on the date of Tender-cum-Auction Sale hereby notified. Though in general the sale will be by way of closed tenders, the Authorised Officer may, at his sole discretion, conduct an Open Auction among the interested bidders who desire to quote a bid higher than the one received in the closed tender process, and in such an event, the sale shall be conferred on the person making highest bid. The sale, however, is subject to confirmation of City Union Bank Limited. (7) The successful bidder shall have to pay 25% (inclusive of EMD paid) of the sale amount immediately on completion of sale and the balance amount of 75% within 15 days from the date of confirmation of sale, failing which the initial deposit of 25% shall be forfeited. (8) The Sale Certificate will be issued by the Authorised Officer in favour of the successful purchaser only after receipt of the entire sale consideration within the time limit stipulated herein. (9) The successful purchaser shall bear the charges/fees payable for conveyance, such as stamp duty, registration fee etc., as applicable under law. (10) The successful bidder should pay the statutory dues (lawful house tax, electricity charges and other dues), TDS, GST if any, due to Government, Government Undertaking and local bodies. (11) The Authorised Officer shall have all the powers to accept or reject the bids or postpone or cancel the sale without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Place : Kumbakonam, Date : 20-04-2024
Authorised Officer

Regd. Office : 149, T.S.R. (Big) Street, Kumbakonam, Thanjavur District, Tamil Nadu - 612 001, CIN - L65110TN1904PLC001287, Telephone No. 0435-2402322, Fax : 0435-2431746, Website : www.cityunionbank.com

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Format C-1

Declaration about criminal cases;

(As per the judgment dated 25" September, 2018, of Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP (Civil) No. 536 of2011 (Public Interest Foundation & 6 Ors. Vs. Union of India & Anr.)

Name and address of candidate : SHOBHA KARANDLAJE
Name of political party : Bharatiya Janatha Party
(Independent candidates should write "Independent" here)
Name of Election : General Election to Lok Sabha -2024
Name of Constituency : 24- Bengaluru North Parliamentary Constituency

I, KUMARI SHOBHA KARANDLAJE (name of candidate), a candidate for the abovementioned election, declare for public information the following details about my criminal antecedents:

(A) Pending criminal cases

Sl No.	Name of Court	Case No. and dated	Status of case(s)	Section(s) of Acts concerned and brief description of offence(s)
1	24th ACMM Bengaluru	CRIME No. 45/2024 21/03/2024	Pending	Sec.123(3), 123(3A), 125 of RP Act Allegation of inflammatory speech and scandalous allegations against particular state
2	Madhurai City Police Station, Tamil Nadu.	CRIME No. 24/2024, 20/03/2024	Pending	Sec. 153, 153A, 505(1)(B), 505 (2) of IPC Allegation of inflammatory speech and scandalous allegations against particular state
3	42nd ACMM. Bengaluru	CC No.37087/2021 24/12/2021	Stayed	Sec. 499 & 500 of IPC Alleged defamation of Sowmya Reddy
4	JMFC Tirur.	CRIME No.33/2020 23/01/2020	Pending Investigation	Sec.153A & 34 of IPC Alleged inflammatory speech
5	CCH 82, Bengaluru,	Spl.CC 124/2014 26/03/2014	Pending Trial	Sec. 45(1) of PMLA R/w. Sec 200 of Cr. PC for offences under Sec 3 & 4 of PMLA Alleged that money is invested in shell company and alleged money laundering

(B) Details about cases of conviction for criminal offences

Sl No.	Name of Court & date(s) of order(s)	Description of offence(s) & punishment imposed	Maximum Punishment Imposed
1	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

JDS supremo H D Deve Gowda had criticised the BJP on several occasions. Now, his party has entered into an alliance with the saffron party. People are watching all this and they will give a fitting reply on April 26

Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister

POLLING DATE
PHASE-2 APRIL 26
PHASE-3 MAY 7

DAYS TO GO
PHASE-2 4
PHASE-3 15

TOTAL SEIZURES
₹403.40 crore

FIRs BOOKED
1,975

GRIEVANCE RECEIVED THROUGH VOTER HELPLINE NUMBER
25,164

COMPLAINTS ON CVIGIL APP
26,369

TWEET OF THE DAY

BJP National President Shri @JPNadda Ji met with the family members of Neha Hiremath who was stabbed to death in broad daylight in Hubballi. While CM Siddaramaiah & his friends are continuing their unblemished track record of appeasement, BJP stands with victims' families & fights for their justice.

@Tejasvi_Surya BJP candidate for Bangalore South

KBG URGES EC TO PROBE RELEASE OF Rs 2CR TO BJP

Minister condemns IT officer, terms it a surgical strike on democracy

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru:

REVENUE Minister Krishna Byre Gowda on Sunday went hammer and tong against the Income Tax department, specifically the officer who released Rs 2crore cash belonging to the BJP, that was seized during a raid by election staff. He urged the Election Commission of India to conduct a probe into the incident. "It is the first such case in the country that a decision was made at lightning speed and an order issued to release the cash. It's a surgical strike on democracy," he said at a press conference.

Meanwhile, Munish Moudgil, MCC Nodal Officer, Bengaluru Urban district, has maintained that the seized cash has not been released, and an FIR was registered on Sunday. "...the cash remains seized by Karnataka police and the case is under investigation," says a press release. The Income Tax authorities have not found ground to seize the cash for IT violation, it added.

"BJP leaders illegally transported Rs 2crore cash that was seized by election officials in Cottonpet on Saturday afternoon. Income Tax officials were also informed about this. However, the IT authorities gave a clean chit and in just four hours, passed an order to return the money to the BJP. How could this be possible?" he questioned.

He alleged that BJP leaders are misusing officials and conducting elections in a manner that is an insult to the system.

The BJP, with some documents, claimed that it drew Rs 5 crore from Canara Bank on March 27 and kept it, and said the money was being sent to Mysuru, Chamarajanagar and Mangaluru as election expenditure of its candidates, Byre Gowda said. "Chamarajanagar BJP candidate has already accounted to the Election Commission that Rs 57 lakh has been spent, Rs 70 lakh was spent in Mysuru and Rs 50 lakh in Mangaluru. Now if Rs 2 crore is added, won't the ceiling of election expenditure of Rs 95 lakh for each candidate be exceeded? Did IT authorities investigate this?" he questioned.

He also questioned the authenticity of the documents BJP produced to reclaim the seized money. "Did BJP not spend a single rupee on elections in the past month? If we also transact like this, will you waive all our transactions?" he said. He also raised the issue of physical transaction of money when digital transfer is possible, and pointed out that there is a law that monetary transactions above Rs 50,000 must be done through bank account or cheque.

The model code of conduct says that during elections, transactions of more than Rs 20,000 should be done through cheques. "It is unfortunate that officials did not pay heed to the law. Isn't it money laundering to transfer Rs 2 crore in violation of the law or without prior information? Or are BJP leaders running a new money laundering racket with the help of election officials?" he thundered.

It is a violation of model code of conduct: Chief Electoral Officer

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

THE letter mentioned the details of Canara Bank, Kodandaramapura branch with account number and cheque details of withdrawal of Rs 5 crore. In the letter, it was also mentioned that of Rs 5 crore, Rs 2 crore was being sent through Venkatesh Prasad in the vehicle bearing registration number KA-09 MB-2412 to be distributed to booth workers of Mysore-Kodagu, Chamarajanagar and Dakshina Kannada Lok Sabha constituencies for party programmes.

Chief Electoral Officer, Karnataka, Manoj Kumar Meena told *The New Indian Express* that two different agencies worked on this. While the IT department found no anomaly, there is a violation as per election rules and hence an FIR has been filed, he said.

"It is a violation of model code of conduct over distribution of money and carrying cash, much more than the permitted limit. Bribery case has been booked as per ECI guidelines," he said.

"This Rs 2 crore cash has been seized by the police and MCC team in Bengaluru Urban district and case booked. The money remains seized. The case was presented to the magistrate and an FIR under various sections of Indian Penal Code electoral offences have been booked," added Munish Moudgil, MCC nodal officer, Bengaluru Urban district.

REVANTH REDDY SPEAKS

'Modi's BJP won't get more than 220 seats'

BANSY KALAPPA @Bengaluru

TERMING this Lok Sabha election as a vote for or against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy declared, "I don't see Narendra Modi's BJP getting more than 220 seats."

Here to galvanise the Telugu speaking population -- about 28 lakh in Bengaluru and about 40 lakh across Karnataka -- for Congress candidates, Reddy said the electorate does not give someone more than two chances. The people gave former PMs Atal Behari Vajpayee and Manmohan Singh two chances, similarly PM Modi too got two terms.

Criticising the BJP government for its lopsided treatment of South India, Reddy said Gujarat takes the best investments, and other states have to make do with the leftovers that trickle down. He claimed that when states in the South get direct investments, the companies get a call from the PMO, and are convinced or forced to take their investments to Gujarat.

"When people's bellies are full, they talk of places of worship and other issues, but when people are hungry, they talk about food, employment and survival. Across the world, this is the trend," said Revanth Reddy.

Asked about direct elections, he said the "RSS formula is direct election. They want to turn it into a 20 per cent minority community versus 80 per cent majority community, work against the minorities and get support from the majority group. They play North vs South and Aryan vs Dravidian".

He claimed that the Congress has always maintained regional balance and offered a formula for equitable development for South and North. "It is an unwritten code in the Congress. If the PM was from the North, someone from the South held the position of President, and many important portfolios were given to those from the south. But not so in this government, BJP did not give party president post to a leader from the South, they even got rid of ministers like Venkaiah Naidu and Sadananda Gowda. The South does not figure in the BJP's scheme of things," he said.

Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy at an interaction with the media in Bengaluru on Sunday | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

When Modi took over as PM, the loan component was Rs 55 lakh crore, but over 10 years, it has increased by Rs 113 lakh crore and now stands at Rs 168 lakh crore. While previous regimes created wealth for the nation, the Modi regime has privatised such wealth. The only memorable monument built by this PM is the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel statue, Reddy added.

He also spoke of the "jugalbandi between the BJP and AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi", which was mutually beneficial to both parties, and explained how they strategically take decisions that help the other directly or indirectly.

ELECTION2024

1,832 special polling booths set up across state

Bengaluru: Chief Electoral Officer, Karnataka, Manoj Kumar Meena on Sunday said of the 58,834 polling booths for the first phase of Lok Sabha elections on April 26 in the state, 1,832 are special polling booths. In the first phase, 5.47 crore voters will exercise their franchise. The special polling booths are dedicated to physically challenged, tribal and first-time voters. To increase the women voting percentage, at least five 'shakti' booths in each assembly constituency are being set up. In total, 1,120 such polling booths will be set up across the state. Similarly, 224 polling booths for the specially challenged people have been set up. Also at least one youth polling booth is being created in each assembly constituency, totalling 224 across the state, to create interest among first-time voters. Tribal polling booths, reflecting the tribal culture, based on their background have been set up across the state, including Mysuru, Chamararajanagar, Kodagu, Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, Chikkamagalur, Hassan and Shivamogga. **ENS**

Get drought relief from Modi's 'akshaya patra', KBG to Gowda

Bengaluru: Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda on Sunday mocked former prime minister HD Deve Gowda who had said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given an 'akshaya patra' (inexhaustible pot) to the state. "Deve Gowda's family is very close to the Prime Minister anyway. He has been celebrating that Modi has given the state an inexhaustible vessel. Then please get drought relief due from the Centre to the state from that inexhaustible vessel," Byre Gowda suggested. Further, he said the Central government, which had announced Rs 530 crore in its budget to implement the Upper Bhadra Project, should release Rs 56 crore at least as first instalment. "Gowda can also get Modi's permission for Mekedatu balancing reservoir project. That will help Bengaluru overcome the water crisis and farmers in Mandya can also raise two crops," he said. **ENS**

The three women were felicitated by Congress leaders in Tumakuru on Sunday

Cong honours women who tried to disrupt Gowda's event

Tumakuru: The Congress has honoured the three women party workers who had allegedly tried to disrupt former prime minister H D Deve Gowda's event held here recently. Party leaders felicitated Vijayalakshmi, Sowbhagya and Bhagya and appreciated the women for their courage. They had raised slogans at a BJP-JDS workers' meeting when Gowda was about to deliver a speech. They were protesting against former chief minister H D Kumaraswamy's alleged remarks that women in villages had "lost their way" because of the state government's guarantees. They were whisked away from the spot by the women police. The women sustained minor injuries. The JDS legal cell had lodged a complaint with the Election Commission as it is a security failure on part of the police, and sought action in this regard.

BYV criticises Cong's chombu campaign

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Mysuru

THE BJP intensified its campaign as state president BY Vijayendra led the party's Mahasamparka Abhiyan launch in Chamaraja constituency of Mysuru on Sunday.

Criticising the Congress for its 'Chombu' campaign, Vijayendra accused the government of emptying the state treasury and relying on Central government funds. He told reporters that post Lok Sabha elections, he predicted a similar fate for Congress leaders like Nalapad, referring to the mug which he showed during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit. He dismissed the Congress advertisement against the central government, alleging a lack of funds and confidence in their campaign.

The state BJP president also expressed outrage over photos involving Neha Hiremath and her murder accused, and said the Congress is behind it. He emphasised the importance of addressing societal issues like protecting girl children, highlighting the grief of Neha's parents, besides "love jihad' and Taliban ideology" in the state.

He also said that CM Siddaramaiah can no longer be labelled a backward class leader as he has neglected minorities.

On farmer loan waiver and Congress' new guarantees, Vijayendra questioned the Congress' ability to deliver, citing their past performance and lack of substantial development. He warned of a public backlash if guarantees were not met. Vijayendra challenged the Congress narrative, and promised a strong response from the people.

Cong model tried & tested: Surjewala

The BJP has weakened the Constitution in many ways. There is a systematic attack on federalism and fiscal freedom

— **Randeep Singh Surjewala, Cong in-charge of Karnataka**

K SHIVA KUMAR @Mysuru

AICC General Secretary and party in-charge of Karnataka, Randeep Singh Surjewala, has said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will demit office on June 4, when the results of the ongoing Lok Sabha elections are declared. He said that the people of the country have lost faith in the BJP-led NDA government at the Centre because of its hollow promises.

Accusing that the BJP has launched a conspiracy against the Constitution as many of its MPs have come out in the open stating that the Constitution will be changed if the BJP gets 400 seats. "The PM has not pulled up such leaders for making statements against the Constitution. They haven't even withdrawn the candidacy of such leaders," Surjewala told reporters here on Sunday. The BJP has weakened the Constitution in many ways, as Karnataka and a few other states have approached the Supreme Court seeking funds. "There is a systematic attack on federalism and fiscal freedom," he added.

On the Election Commission not issuing notice to those accused of airing statements about changing the Constitution in the run-up to the polls, he said that "this was the harsh reality of institutions in the country." He said that the ECI was designed and produced by Modi himself in the presence of a minister by changing the rules. ECI has been weakened beyond recognition, he charged.

He said that the Congress model is a tried and tested one, whereas the Modi model has failed. He said that the BJP wants to snatch the rights of Dalits and OBCs, minorities, and the poor. He said that the BJP and its ally, JDS, are against the Congress government's guarantees.

On whether the Congress will press for the counting of VVPAT, Surjewala said there are serious doubts if the VVPATS are tampered with, and hence, all the VVPAT slips should be counted.

He said that the low polling percentage is not a good sign and there is disgruntlement between the BJP and Modi who never speaks of corruption, inflation, unemployment, or concentration of wealth. He accused the DNA of BJP is against the oppressed. He also condemned the increase in attacks on SCs/STs.

FULFILLED OUR PROMISES, VOTE FOR US, SAYS CM

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

SIDDARAMAIAH had assured the youth that he would provide two crore jobs a year. They believed that and voted for him. When all those voters, who had completed their degrees, asked for jobs, he said, 'go sell pakodas'. Isn't that a great betrayal of the youth of the country? Should we have a Prime Minister to teach us how to sell pakodas," he asked.

Campaigning for Congress candidate KV Gowtham, the chief minister asked, "What was the price of petrol, diesel, LPG, fertilisers, pulses and cooking oil before Modi came to power? What is it now?"

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah campaigns for Kolar Congress candidate KV Gowtham in the constituency on Sunday | EXPRESS

He said, "The Congress government in the state is putting Rs 4,000-6,000 in the pocket of each family every month. We have fulfilled our promises. Vote for us. We will respect your vote and put the benefits of development in your pocket and your account. If you vote for Congress, you will get Rs 1.5 lakh a year. The money will go into the bank accounts of women heads of households. Compare this with what you got for 10 years. All you got from PM Modi was a pile of lies and betrayal. Loans of farmers of the entire country will be waived off if Congress comes to power. We will give Rs 1 lakh to unemployed youth and assured support price to farmers for their crops."

He said, "Former AICC president Rahul Gandhi and AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge have signed a letter announcing 25 such guarantees. These letters will reach you soon."

Thiruvananthapuram cyber police registered a case against UDF candidate Shashi Tharoor on the complaint of NDA candidate Rajeev Chandrasekhar. Rajeev alleged that Tharoor had claimed that Rajeev was purchasing votes from certain religious outfits operating in the coastal belt. The ECI had issued a warning to Tharoor on the matter earlier

ELECTORAL BONDS, PM CARES BIG SCANDALS, SAYS PARAKALA

Even loss-making companies paid ruling party: political economist

BANSY KALAPPA @ Bengaluru

TERMING the Electoral Bonds issue as the "biggest scam in the world", considering the quantum of funds involved, political economist Parakala Prabhakar said the BJP government's claim of transparent political funding did not hold water. He spoke of crony capitalism as a major corruption issue, and said the PM Cares Fund is also a scam.

Asked about PM Narendra Modi's explanation of the Electoral Bonds, he said, "If it is about transparency in political funding, why didn't the government tell the people about it since 2018, since when it has been in force. Why did the petitioners have to go to the highest court, the Supreme Court, to find out the truth, and why did the government ask for time till elections were over, before presenting the details?"

"Why I called it the biggest scam in the world is not just because of the money exchanged, it was a 'money dance' involving thousands of crores of rupees given in exchange for contracts, and to stop Enforcement Directorate (ED) and Income Tax raids. Had the raids been pursued, they would have unearthed hundreds and thousands of crores. You can imagine what the country has lost in terms of contracts, and there is the issue of money laundering. Just look at the companies – those which were not making profits and those making losses also paid up, how did they get the money? It means there was a lot of money laundering within the Electoral Bonds scheme also, which has astonished me more. The institution which is supposed to be fiercely independent, the Reserve Bank of India, was also pressurised to accept and relax rules and regulations. After EBs were bought, regulations were relaxed, which means that even RBI was compromised. Also, there were Production Linked Incentives (PLI) for errant pharma companies," Parakala Prabhakar said.

On the PM Cares Fund, he said those who seek details are told it has nothing to do with the government, and doesn't fall under it. "All government employees were made to donate one day's salary, public sector undertakings were asked to give money and now the government is not telling us where is it getting money from, how much has been collected, how much does the government spend, and on what. Nothing is known, and if this can happen in a democratic country, I have very serious apprehensions. This is probably going to be an even bigger scam," he said.

On Karnataka's complaint of stepmotherly treatment in devolution of funds and grants from the Union government, he said the BJP government has no belief in the federal structure and the way it treats states and chief ministers in the GST Council and NITI Aayog, shows its discrimination. It happens with states where non-BJP governments are in power. They tell people to elect the BJP and "double-engine sarkar" to get money due to them. This is very detrimental and dangerous, Prabhakar added.

Crony capitalism can be summarised in one sentence: You give 5kg of foodgrains to poor people, and give five airports to your friend. You can tell the poor you are looking out for them. This is happening with many public sector undertakings, and airports and assets are given to 'friends', he said.

TN voters: EC power needs to be regularised

B ANBUSELVAN @ Chennai

WITH complaints of the deletion of thousands of voter names emerging on polling day in Tamil Nadu, a section of voters and activists have demanded that the Election Commission of India's authority to unilaterally delete voter names should be regulated.

They demanded that it should be mandatory for notice to be issued to voters before their names are deleted and that a provision should be made for voters to exercise their franchise in the event of an erroneous deletion. On these demands, however, ECI officials remain tight-lipped and Chief Electoral Officer Satyabrata Sahoo could not be reached for comments.

During the general election polling on April 19, thousands of voters in Chennai and other parts of TN complained their names had been deleted despite possessing valid voter IDs and residing at the same address for several years.

According to ECI rules, voter names can be removed upon receiving Form 7 from family members. The Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) has the authority to delete names under suo motu powers in cases of death and other reasons. The ECI's guidelines for electoral roll revision suggest that Booth Level Officers (BLOs) should carry out field verification and issue notices to voters before their names are deleted, but in practice this is hardly implemented.

According to official data, 6.02 lakh voters were removed from the rolls between Jan 2022 and Jan 2023, and 6.43 lakh were removed between Jan 2023 and Jan 2024.

Sources from the Greater Chennai Corporation attributed the deletion of names to various reasons including death of voters, change of address and error rectification. "In the process of standardising the Electoral Photo Identification Card (EPIC) from 2019 to 2020, the Election Commission converted non-standard EPIC numbers into 10-digit alphanumeric ones and issued new identity cards to voters accordingly. However, a year later, it was found that multiple voter IDs had been issued with the same EPIC number," explained an official.

FESTIVE SPIRIT

Members of Shree Maha Jain Sangh take out a procession to celebrate Mahavir Janma Kalyanak, one of the most important religious festivals for Jains, in Chennai on Sunday | ASHWIN PRASATH

Why didn't KMF sponsor K'taka sports team, asks Pai

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

WHILE many were thrilled with Nandini going global, several took to social media and questioned the cooperative and government as to why a Karnataka-based product was sponsoring teams abroad. TV Mohandas Pai, former Infosys director, also joined the online debate and asked why did KMF not sponsor the state sports teams and artists.

"Why not sponsor the Karnataka Ranji team, Karnataka sports persons, Karnataka artists? Farmers' children, scholarship for poor? KMF is funded by Kannadiga taxpayers' money, subsidy and investments from the budget but chooses to spend on foreign teams whom nobody knows!" wrote the businessman on X. Previously, KMF had sponsored the Bengaluru team in the Pro Kabaddi League. It has presence in international markets such as the Middle East, Singapore, Bhutan and Myanmar.

The costs for the sponsorship for the two teams are estimated at Rs 2-2.5 crore per team, according to sources familiar with the deal.

'Hostels should be under strict surveillance'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

He warned the authorities that hostels should be under strict CCTV surveillance and the health of girls should be monitored by organising checkups every month. An eye must also be kept on long-term absentee students at taluk and district levels by the task force officials.

The letter read, "A large number of girls under the age of 18 are getting pregnant in the state. Factors such as child marriage, social ills, poverty, regional and cultural differences, personal attitudes, sexual assaults, and lack of sexual awareness are the reasons for it." The CM added that various departments need to work in "coordination to prevent such practices at the grassroots level and strictly implement the legal framework applicable to the crimes."

With many technical glitches plaguing the system, Siddaramaiah advocated that a simpler procedure needs to be made available for reporting cases of teen pregnancies in private hospitals. "Develop a new centralised system to document compliance reports and information about the current incidents in the state to prevent pregnancies by recording accurate facts," he instructed in the letter.

Sex education must be imparted via media in simple terms to parents and children and monitored by vigilance committees. "Conducting awareness programmes on self-defence measures, child marriages and evil social practices and creating awareness about physical growth at the school level is of utmost importance," read the letter.

Drug store retailers and doctors who sell Schedule-H drugs such as abortion pills without a doctor's prescription will be prosecuted under the law, emphasised the CM. NGOs and activists working in the field welcomed CM's move and hoped for better implementation of child protection laws in the state.

TEEN PREGNANCIES

State has witnessed a sharp rise in teen pregnancy cases over the last four years.

YEAR	CASES
2023*	28,657
2022	19,561
2021	13,159
2020	10,101

*TILL NOVEMBER

A first, Ceylon frogmouth spotted in Uttara Kannada

SUBHASH CHANDRA NS @ Joida (Uttara Kannada)

CEYLON Frogmouth, a rare endemic bird species, has been photographed and recorded for the first time in Joida and surrounding areas. This is one of the very few sightings of this bird recorded in the state. Ceylon frogmouth is a species endemic to the Western Ghats, which has been sighted on a few occasions in Brahmagiri, and a few parts of Dakshina Kannada. This nocturnal bird has for the first time been recorded in Uttara Kannada.

"I heard the call which is quite rare here and followed it. It was thrilling to spot and photograph a bird so rare in the area," said Rajini, a bird expert in Dandeli. She said that she found it behind an undisclosed property in Joida. "It was also sighted around Bapeli cross," she said.

Another wildlife photographer and managing partner of Hornbill Resort also supported the claim stating that there has been a couple of sightings of Ceylon Frogmouth, which is rare in the state. "The bird is in the check list of Anshi Dandeli. This is the first time I was able to establish the bird's sighting with a photograph," he said.

Frogmouths are purely nocturnal in nature and prefer dense woods. They are primarily found in pairs. The bird is about 9 inches in size with a wide beak and split nostrils which appears like a frog. The male is more dominated by the greyish brown colour, while the female is chestnut brown. The bird is related to the Nightjars roost. The male and female are normally sighted together, except on a few rare occasions.

Though the bird is distributed across the world and is considered as least concerned, as per IUCN, its existence is threatened due to loss of habitat. The bird being totally nocturnal is rarely sighted during the day. However, there are instances of the bird being sighted during twilight in parts of Kerala and Brahmagiri.

Ceylon frogmouth spotted in Joida, Uttara Kannada district

Karnataka may get drought relief through SC's intervention: Minister

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

REVENUE Minister Krishna Byre Gowda here on Sunday expressed confidence that the Supreme Court would issue directions to the Centre to release NDRF funds against drought relief. As the Supreme Court will hear the writ petition filed by the state on Monday, Gowda left for the national capital on Sunday to hold deliberations with the state's counsels. "On April 8, the Supreme Court heard the case during which the attorney general representing the Centre sought two weeks' time and it is listed for Monday. We hope that with the Supreme Court's intervention will get the drought relief fund due to the farmers of the state," he told.

The minister of state for home affairs Nityanand Rai had written to Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on March 15, that the High Level Committee (HLC) meeting to be convened under the chairmanship of home minister Amit Shah did not take place. The state which had submitted its report seeking the funds on Nov 13, 2023 itself, has been forced to move the Supreme Court, he said.

It may be noted that Congress had raised the issue, but Amit Shah blamed the delay in release of funds on the delay in the submission of the report. However, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitaraman, admitted the delay, and claimed that the matter is with the ECI, which has to give its permission to HLC to convene the meeting.

EXPRESS READ

Pooram fiasco: Thrissur top cop, ACP transferred

T'Puram/Thrissur: Amid mounting criticism of the police's highhandedness during the Thrissur Pooram, the Kerala state government on Sunday cracked the whip, ordering the transfer of Thrissur Police Commissioner Ankit Asokan and Assistant Commissioner K Sudersan. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, who is in-charge of the home portfolio, directed the state police chief to conduct a departmental probe on the controversial role played by the police in the smooth conduct of the Pooram festival, and submit a report within one week. The state government's order came after the police's over-bearing approach invited severe criticism.

Remains of India's only Homo Narmadensis in Ballari museum

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Ballari

The Robert Bruce Foote Sangankal Archaeological Museum (RBFSAM) in Ballari has become even richer in its collection as it added one more 3-4 lakh year old skull Homo Narmadensis - the only one from India.

The said Homo Narmadensis was discovered by a well-known geologist late Arun Sonakia on the banks of river Narmada in Hathnora in 1982. This is the cranial part of the right side of the human skull. This is the only human remains of an early man found in the country. The skull gained importance among the scholars as they were able to study and throw more light on human's biological evolution.

This is the only museum in the country dedicated to prehistory, and has skulls which help understand human evolutions across the world.

But for the first time it has added a sample of early man from India - expected to boost pre historic study in the country.

The museum now has fifteen skulls on display. "So far, there were 14 clone skulls-found across the world, including the famous Lucy, which was about 32 lakh years ago," said well-known archaeologist, Prof Korishettar, who was responsible for establishment of the museum.

The museum boasts of showcasing details of human biological and cultural evolution that started around 32 lakh years ago, through infographics and artefacts.

6 of family drown near Dandeli

SUBHASH CHANDRA NS @ Dandeli (Uttara Kannada)

SIX persons, all members of a family from Hubballi who had gone on a tour of Dandeli, drowned in Kali river on Sunday. All of them drowned while trying to rescue six-year-old girl Mohina Ahmed, who had slipped into the river at Akhoda village near Biriyampali in Joida taluk which adjoins Dandeli town.

The deceased were identified as Nazir Ahmed Chaman Saan Honnambal (40), his children Almiya Ahmed and Mohina, Nazir's sister-in-law Reshma Unnisa Taufeeq Ahmed (38), her children Ifra Ahmed (15) and Abid Ahmed (12).

A local resident said that Mohina was found floating in the river, when Nazir jumped trying to rescue her, while the others followed him.

NO LIGHTNING ARRESTER AT ANCIENT MONUMENTS IN VIJAYAPURA

FIROZ ROZINDAR @ Vijayapura

THE severe damage to one of the minarets of the ancient Mehtar Mahal monument of the city on Thursday evening due to lightning has brought a shocking information to light that none of the ancient monuments of city have lightning arrester system installed or functioning. They are either completely damaged or never installed in the first place.

Thursday's incident where a portion of minaret was destroyed that resulted in severe damage to a car parked near the monument, has proved that the ancient monuments of the city are not protected from lightning.

Admitting that the damaged monument did not have lightning arrester, the official of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) also admitted that most of the ancient monuments including the enchanting Gol Gumbaz and Ibrahim Roza have no lightning arrester system in place.

"Actually 10 years ago, the ASI had installed lightning arresters in 90% of the monuments coming under the jurisdiction of ASI in Vijayapura city. But unfortunately, people have stolen the copper wire which is an intrinsic part of the lightning arrester system. Now, none of the monuments has a functioning lightning arrester system," the official said. He said that the city has 81 protected monuments by ASI, which makes it the second highest ASI protected monuments in the country after Delhi.

Speaking to *The New India Express*, he said that they never thought the lightning would be so intense in Vijayapura that it could damage the monuments.

"But now after this incident, we have conveyed the message to the higher officials and are seeking their permission to install the arresters in all the monuments", he said.

The official said that they will give first priority to the monuments which are very tall. This year, the ASI plans to install the system in at least ten monuments. Other monuments will be taken in a phased manner. Meanwhile, he has appealed to the people not to steal the copper strip as it will ensure safety of not just the monument but also of the people.

With regard to the restoration and conservation of the damaged portion of Mehtar Mahal, the official said that they will first place scaffolding to prevent the structure from further damage. "We will first put scaffolding. Later explore the possibility of restoration. This year, we will take conservation works of Mehtar Mahal," he said, and claimed that it is possible to restore the damaged portion, the same as the original structure.

Even magnificent monuments such as Gol Gumbaz of Vijayapura city have no lightning arrester system (Right) Mehtar Mahal | EXPRESS

> Siddaramaiah is more concerned about minorities than Dalits and backward communities. This minority appeasement politics has led to the murder of a woman in Hubballi. It is clear that the CM has no concern for women's safety
>
> B Y Vijayendra, BJP state president

Nadda seeks CBI probe into Neha's murder

BJP national prez, Pralhad Joshi meet victim's family, attack Congress government over law and order situation

AMIT S UPADHYE @Hubballi

BJP national president JP Nadda, who visited the residence of Congress corporator Niranjan Hiremath in Hubballi demanded for a CBI probe into the murder of the latter's daughter, Neha. Neha Hiremath, 24, was stabbed to death on her college campus on April 18 allegedly by Fayaz, who is currently under police custody.

Nadda was accompanied by Union Minister Pralhad Joshi. Both leaders came down heavily on the Karnataka Congress government. While Nadda demanded that the State Government take all necessary actions against the murder accused, Joshi said that the Congress government can stoop to any level to get votes and today it is standing with the people who support love jihad.

Nadda said that incidents like Neha's murder should not be repeated ever again. "Her murder is an attack on humanity. It is a heart-wrenching incident. I have spoken to the parents and other family members. The BJP has condemned the attack and the whole country is with Neha's family. We all will fight for justice. I am demanding the State Government to hand over the probe to the CBI," Nadda elaborated.

Nadda also pointed out that the statements of Karnataka Chief Minister, Siddaramaiah, and Home Minister, Dr G Parameshwara, could influence or dilute the investigation. "It is not right to give statements when investigation is underway. The State Government should stop appeasement politics which people of the state will not forgive," he said.

Chairperson of Karnataka State Women Commission, Dr Nagalakshmi Choudhary, called on the family members of Neha Hiremath.

Meanwhile, the Anjumane Islam Dharwad president Ismail Tamatgar called for a bandh for the business establishments in the Anjuman complex to extend support seeking justice for Neha Hiremath who was murdered recently in Hubballi. He also said that the members decided to name a block in their institute after Neha.

State Women Commission Chairperson Dr Nagalakshmi Choudhary consoles Neha's mother in Hubballi | D HEMANTH

POLICE HONOURED FOR CATCHING ACCUSED

The Hubballi-Dharwad police honoured the police team from Vidyanagar police station which apprehended Fayaz within an hour of the incident. Hubballi-Dhrwad Police Commissioner Renuka Sukumar presented a cash award of Rs 25,000 and 'Cop of the Month' badge to the police team.

1 held for creating account in Fayaz, Neha's name

The Dharwad police arrested Shaikh, 28, a gym trainer after he posted photos of Neha and Fayaz on a newly created social media platform. Besides this account, several new pages were found in the name of Fayaz and Neha. The Hubballi-Dharwad police are investigating and keeping an eye on such accounts, which were created a day after the gruesome murder of Neha.

DKS consoles Hiremath family

Bengaluru: DCM D K Shivakumar called up Niranjan Hiremath, father of Neha Hiremath, who was brutally murdered in Hubballi last Thursday. "We too are shocked by this tragedy. We share the grief that has befallen you and your family. The government is with you. The guilty will be punished," he told the family, and assured them of strict legal action against the accused. "I understand the pain you have suffered from the loss of your daughter. May God give you and your family members the strength to bear the pain." He called Hiremath, a Congress councillor, while campaigning in Anekal on Sunday afternoon for his brother DK Suresh, candidate from Bengaluru Rural constituency. Shivakumar told the family that he could not come to Hubballi personally as he was busy with the pre-scheduled election campaign, and promised to visit after the elections.

BJP claims of appeasement politics absurd: Santosh Lad

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Vijayapura

EXPRESSING grief over the brutal murder of student Neha Hiremath recently in Hubballi, Labour Minister Santosh Lad accused the BJP of trying to turn the issue into a religious one to gain political mileage out of a tragic incident.

Addressing media persons here on Sunday, he said the BJP always looks for a communal angle into tragic and unfortunate incidents.

"I am asking the BJP, if the accused were a Hindu, will it take up the issue with the same intensity that it has taken now as the accused belongs to the Muslim community. We have seen murders taking place in Mangaluru also, but the BJP did not make those an issue because there was no Hindu-Muslim angle. The party raises only those criminal acts as its issue if that suits its political ideology," he said.

The minister said the Congress treats everyone equally and never tries to politicise such sensitive issues.

Replying to allegations that the Congress' appeasement politics is leading to such crimes, Lad called the allegation rubbish and absurd. "How can any sane government ever support or encourage people to murder. We accept political allegations, but it is too absurd that the Congress is instigating people to commit crimes such as murder," he shot back.

Claiming that according to a report, some six rapes take place everyday in Gujarat, the minister asked BJP leaders, including MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal, to raise their voice in support of the victims and go to Gujarat.

Labour Minister, Santosh Lad addresses the media in Vijayapura on Sunday

According to the National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB), over 13 lakh women have gone missing in the country between 2021-22, but the BJP never raises the issue, he said.

Stating that the BJP has no guts to talk on development, falling GDP, inflation, poverty and unemployment, and raises issues such as Hindu-Muslim, Pakistan, Ram Temple etc.

"The BJP is raising these issues deliberately because they have nothing to say on the development. They have kept hoodwinking people, therefore they cannot talk on development now," the minister said.

He claimed that since the BJP got exposed on the development front, people of Karnataka will not support the party in the LS polls. "The Congress is going to win at least 15 seats in the LS election," he said.

BJP national president J P Nadda honoured by party leaders during a public rally in Hubballi on Sunday | D HEMANTH

I.N.D.I.A an alliance of the corrupt: Nadda

MALLIKARJUN HIREMATH @Hubballi

BJP national president J P Nadda came down heavily on Congress and other party leaders of the I.N.D.I.A bloc, saying that it's nothing but an alliance of "family politics and corruption".

"Most of the alliance leaders are either on bail or in jail. Congress leaders, including Rahul Gandhi, are not ashamed of associating with anti-national elements," he said at a public gathering in Vidyanagar in Hubballi on Sunday.

Referring to Congress leader DK Suresh over the "separate nation for South" statement, he blamed Chief Minister Siddaramaiah for protecting those who raise pro-Pak slogans. "They even do not condemn such incidents. The Congress is a party of liars. They have been alleging that state is not getting it's share of funds, but the truth is that the central government has released funds almost four times higher than that done by the Congress."

"We promised to lift Article 370 and we did it, we promised Ram Mandir and we did it and we have become the top five economy. But the only thing is we have to keep away the people who are involved in corruption and appeasement politics for the sake of votes and power," he added.

He also claimed that the nation will be the third top economy in days to come under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He also briefed about the government schemes and programmes during the event.

Union Minister Pralhad Joshi said Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and other Congress leaders have not made intentional statements over the muder of Neha Hiremath to appease a particular community for votes.

Modi-Shah woo SCs, STs, OBCs on their own

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI @ Bengaluru

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah seem to be executing their own strategy to woo backward classes and Dalits across the country, including Karnataka.

Continuing to take the name of Dr BR Ambedkar at his rallies, Modi at Chikkaballapur on Saturday claimed, "The SC/ST and OBC communities have gained tremendously from our (Centre's) development initiatives."

Taking the party's pitch further, Shah is holding an OBC rally at Kibbanahalli Cross in the Tumakuru Lok Sabha constituency on Wednesday. He will share the dais with former prime minister and JDS supremo HD Deve Gowda. They are expected to touch upon the issue of ST tag to Kadugollas. The community's state president, Rajanna, said, "We are about eight lakh voters across the state and we will back the BJP-led NDA this time."

Though Congress too is trying to woo the community with party senior leader Rahul Gandhi promising to conduct the caste census if the party is voted to power, it has failed to gain momentum in the state.

Tapping into this lacuna, BJP is trying to win over OBCs, except Kurubas, who rally behind Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. "Over time, Siddaramaiah is restricting himself to the Kuruba community, leaving leaders of other communities in the lurch. Capitalising on the opportunity, BJP will woo other OBCs and groom new leaders," a BJP leader said.

The saffron party, following advice from a thinktank, is not depending on regional leaders from these communities to attract voters, but is promoting Modi as their representative in a novel strategy, sources said.

The BJP leadership feels that Veerashaiva Lingayats in Karnataka, by and large, support Modi's leadership and the party's gameplan is to woo the rest of them. Forging an alliance with JDS to get Vokkaligas votes and fielding Gowda's son-in-law Dr CN Manjunath is part of a grand scheme of things, political pundits said.

Former chief minister and senior BJP leader BS Yediyurappa and Siddaramaiah used to woo the communities in their own style with Siddaramaiah claiming himself to be the champion of the AHINDA grouping - an acronym for minorities, backward classes and Dalits.

Prominent Cong leader joins JDS

Kolar: Days ahead of first phase of polling in the state, the Congress party faced a setback in Kolar as a prominent leader and former ZP member Ramachandra joined JDS. He said the Grand Old Party is neglecting SC Right community. Speaking to media persons here on Sunday, Ramachandra said it's open an secret that he is strong follower of K H Muniyappa and worked for the Congress in the last several year. He rued that the party has not identified the SC Right community hence he decided to switch to the regional party. Welcoming him to the party fold, senior JDS leader C M R Srinath said Ramachandra joining the JDS will help us get more votes and he is a grassroot leader with wide network. It may be recalled that earlier also Ramachandra had joined the JDS from the Congress and unsuccessfully ran from Bangarpet Assembly seat. **ENS**

ALL ALLIES NOW

JDS state president and former CM HD Kumaraswamy campaigns for BJP candidate for Bangalore South Tejasvi Surya at Vijayanagar on Sunday | EXPRESS

Cracks in BJP, Jarkiholi, Katti, Kore stay away from campaign

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Belagavi/Athani

THWARTED personal ambitions and a lack of unity are apparent among senior leaders of the BJP, due to which they are staying away from campaigning in Chikkodi Lok Sabha constituency. These leaders include former MP Ramesh Katti, former Rajya Sabha member Prabhakar Kore and Gokak MLA **Ramesh Jarkiholi**.

It is an open secret that Katti was interested in contesting from Chikkodi and had approached the BJP central leadership several times. But the BJP high command refused to give him the ticket, and instead declared Annasaheb Jolle as its candidate. Following this, Katti stayed away from campaigning in the constituency.

Prabhakar Kore too is upset as he was not nominated as Rajya Sabha member, and neither was his son Amit Kore given the ticket for Chikkodi. He had many expectations from the BJP high command which remained neglected, sources in the BJP said.

Meanwhile, Ramesh Jarkiholi appears to be more interested in defeating Congress candidate Mrinal Hebbalkar, son of minister Laxmi Hebbalkar in Belagavi LS constituency, rather than campaigning for the BJP candidate in Chikkodi.

Another reason is that the Congress candidate is Priyanka Jarkiholi, daughter of his younger brother Satish Jarkiholi. It appears he is staying away from campaigning as he would have to go against his own niece.

Sources said that BJP's Hubballi-Dharwad MLA Mahesh Tenginkai took the lead in sorting out the three leaders' problems and convince them to join the campaign, but failed to do so. Tenginkai, speaking to TNIE, denied there are any problems in the party concerning Kore, Katti and Jarkiholi. He said they had their own personal problems due to which they were not participating in the party campaign, but would soon join the action in Chikkodi.

WILL THE TWO Ps BURY THE HATCHET IN HASSAN FOR AN NDA WIN?

BR UDAYA KUMAR @ Hassan

THE "strained relationship" between former BJP MLA Preetam J Gowda and NDA candidate Prajwal Revanna does not seem to get any better in Hassan. Now, with Lok Sabha elections less than a week away, JDS leaders are making futile attempts to take Preetam, who is also the BJP state general secretary, into confidence to ensure that Prajwal emerges victorious.

Preetam, who campaigned for the NDA in Hassan recently, avoided taking Prajwal's name and campaigned by highlighting the achievements of the Modi-led Union Government. "Preetam refused to bury the hatchet despite the intervention from several BJP leaders, including party Karnataka election in-charge Radha Mohan Agarwal, trying to unite both the young leaders," said a BJP insider.

Sources said that Preetam decided not to join hands with the JDS after its leaders allegedly claimed that they would win the seat without his support.

However, former minister and JDS leader HD Revanna and his son Prajwal, have intensified their campaign by meeting the close confidants of Preetam. This has angered Preetam even more, said sources.

Sources said that Prajwal, along with former ministers Dr CN Ashwath Narayan and CT Ravi, called on Sharath, a close confidant of Preetam, to seek the latter's support recently. Sharath reportedly expressed his displeasure to the trio and said that he and Preetam's followers have decided not to campaign for the NDA candidate.

However, in a surprise move, a section of Preetam's supporters campaigned for Congress candidate Shreyas Patel. It may be recalled that Preetam also stayed away from the poll campaign when Karnataka BJP president BY Vijayendra addressed a gathering in Hassan recently.

Sources in JDS said that Revanna is chalking out strategies to retain the seat by taking the prominent leaders of all parties into confidence.

It may be recalled that BJP supporters did not include the picture of Preetam on a flex board at a JDS-BJP joint campaign in Arkalgud recently.

Preetam took part in a road show in which LoP R Ashoka participated. However, no leader from the JDS or its workers was present at the roadshow held in Hassan on Thursday.

Highly placed sources said that JDS leaders have reportedly decided not to pursue the Preetam issue as they are unhappy with the BJP high command for failing to direct Preetam to campaign for Prajwal.

The Congress has always insulted the backward classes. The Congress opposed the Mandal Commission report for several years. Now, Lalu Prasad's RJD has joined hands with the Congress

Amit Shah, Home Minister

As many as 22 candidates are in the fray, but the main contest is between the BJP MP Jugal Kishore and Jammu and Kashmir Congress working president Raman Bhalla

BATTLE FOR JAMMU

18 ASSEMBLY SEGMENTS SPREAD OVER 4 DISTRICTS

MALE 9,21,053 | FEMALE 8,59,657

THIRD GENDER: 28

VOTERS 17.81 LAKH

VOTING: APRIL 26

MAIN CONTEST

Jugal Kishore versus (BJP)

Raman Bhalla (Congress)

2019 WINNER: JUGAL KISHORE (BJP)
LOSER: RAMAN BHALLA (CONGRESS)
VICTORY MARGIN: 3.09 LAKH VOTES

2014 WINNER: JUGAL KISHORE (BJP)
LOSER: MADAN LAL SHARMA (INC)
VICTORY MARGIN: 2.57 LAKH VOTES

Ayodhya takes back seat in 'City of Temples'

Roads, development and job generation will be decisive factors as Jammu goes to polls on April 26

FAYAZ WANI @ Jammu

THE 'city of temples' Jammu will vote in the second phase of polling on April 26. Going by the campaigning of various parties, the issues of development, Article 370 abrogation, peaceful border, taking away of statehood, unemployment are the key factors in the election. The consecration of Ram Mandir in Ayodhya has not found much traction in the ongoing parliamentary polls.

The Jammu Lok Sabha seat is spread over four districts of Jammu, Samba, Reasi and an assembly constituency of Rajouri district. As many as 22 candidates are in the fray, but the main contest is between the BJP MP Jugal Kishore and Jammu and Kashmir Congress working president Raman Bhalla.

The key contenders are busy organising small street-corner meetings to reach out to the common man.

A total of 17,80,738 voters, including 9,21,053 men and 8,59,657 women are eligible to vote for in the constituency.

The BJP has focused its campaign on the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A, the developmental works and public welfare schemes launched post Article 370 repeal, peaceful borders, the decline in militancy, and the end to stone-pelting.

The Ram temple issue has also been raised by the party leaders during their campaigns but not very stridently. This is despite the fact that Jammu is known as the city of temples and temples can be found everywhere.

"We have focused on development. A lot of public-oriented development has taken place in Jammu and Poonch and people are happy. Their problems are being solved. People know that only Prime Minister Narendra Modi can take the country forward and make India Viksit Bharat (developed country)," said BJP MP and candidate for Jammu seat Jugal Kishore.

On construction of Ram Mandir, he said sentiments of people were associated with the Ayodhya temple and people also remember the construction of it, as well as the scrapping of triple talaq and repeal of Article 370.

The Prime Minister inaugurated the Ram temple in Ayodhya in January this year. In 2019, the Supreme Court gave land to Hindus after a protracted legal battle followed by Babri Masjid's demolition.

The Congress, on the other hand, is focusing its campaign on the fallout of Article 370 abrogation including the "snatching" of statehood, rise in unemployment and crime.

"Our campaign focuses on the restoration of statehood, corruption during these years, unemployment and crime," said Congress spokesman Ravindra Sharma.

A college teacher, Pankaj Kumar, said religion and politics should not be linked. "The construction of Ram temple is very dear to us. It is our religious issue but the polls are not contested on religious lines but contested for roads, electricity, drinking water, development, and job generation," he said.

"We want jobs for our youth. The government that comes into power should evolve such a system that provides employment to the unemployed youth so that they can live a decent life," Kumar added.

Rohit Kumar said Jammu comprises a mixed population. "Muslims and Hindus have been living in harmony for years and we don't want to hurt this relationship by unnecessarily giving hype to religious issues."

He said no doubt the construction of Ram temple is a very historic development and sentiments of Hindu of every part of the country, including Jammu Muslims, are associated with it.

"When the Ram temple was built, the puja was held here in every area and Muslims also contributed in setting up of pandals and raised our religious flags on their homes to express solidarity with us," Rohit said.

According to locals here, even during the land row agitation in 2008, there was communal harmony among Muslims and Hindus in Jammu.

"It is not the time to play politics on religion. We want our new MP to focus on eliminating the threat of drug addiction and crime by providing jobs to the youth."

Jammu was marred by anti-government protests in the past three years, which dented the BJP's image. There were protests by job aspirants after at least three recruitment lists came under the scanner for reported scams. Rising electricity charges and the installation of faulty smart meters also sparked protests.

However, the BJP's move to set up a Tirupati Balaji temple amid the scenic Shivalik forests in Majeen, Jammu, and running direct fast trains to Katra, which houses the famous Mata Vaishno Devi shrine, is perceived to have won back some Hindu votes.

QUOTE CORNER

In the INDIA rally in Ranchi today, the workers of RJD and Congress hit each other with chairs... Where is their unity?

Ravi Shankar Prasad, BJP leader

They will scrap the Constitution scripted by Ambedkar. If you want to keep it alive, uphold the right to vote

Mallikarjun Kharge, Congress chief

You call my party 'nakli' (duplicate) Shiv Sena Is my Shiv Sena like your degree that you call nakli? People will show you your place

Uddhav Thackeray, SHS(UBT) chief

CHHATTISGARH

BJP makes hollow promises, evades real issues: Priyanka

EJAZ KAISER @ Raipur

CONGRESS general secretary Priyanka Gandhi on Sunday alleged that the Modi-led BJP government at the Centre intends to change the Constitution and curb the rights guaranteed to the people.

Addressing an election rally at Balod in Chhattisgarh's Kanker Lok Sabha seat, she said the BJP leaders visit only to make tall 'hollow' promises but evade real issues when confronted by the people.

"Many BJP leaders and their ministers are openly saying in their campaign that the Constitution will change if their figure touches 400 in Lok Sabha while Prime Minister Narendra Modi denies it. This is their strategy, otherwise how can BJP leaders dare to talk openly on changing the Constitution without the presumed consent of Modi ji? The reality is they can no longer be trusted and once the numbers are achieved, they will begin changing the Constitution," the Congress leader said, and cautioned that the people will lose their privilege of rights to live with dignity.

Urging the people to vote wisely with conscience, she said that the voters have the power to change the government if it fails to fulfil what the people expect or deserve.

"There is dire need for a change. If BJP returns for the next five years, no one can give guarantee on the fate of this country. The Constitution will change, rights will be restricted, citizens will face rise in inflation and unemployment while big industrialists will get more dominion and leaders become more powerful," she asserted.

Congress leaders Priyanka Gandhi and Sachin Pilot during an election campaign at Kanker district in Chhattisgarh on Sunday | PTI

Priyanka claimed that the previous Congress government in Chhattisgarh attended and resolved issues faced by all segments of society but the new BJP government has stopped the welfare schemes launched by the earlier Bhupesh Baghel government.

'Indira Gandhi did not do show-off politics'

Priyanka Gandhi asked if Modi is so powerful to stop the war or influence global leaders, then why is the same power not being used to address unemployment and inflation. "This suggests he has only been projected as powerful," she said. Drawing an analogy between Modi and Indira Gandhi, she said that the latter patiently listened to problems and ensured people got their due rights, "Indiraji did not engage in show-off politics. People need to deeply realise what's happening around," she said.

Many BJP leaders are openly saying in their campaign that the Constitution will change if their figure touches 400 in LS, while PM denies it. It's their strategy – Priyanka Gandhi

MAHARASHTRA

Oppn trying to save dynasties, BJP fulfils its promises: Nadda

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Mumbai

BJP president Jagat Prakash Nadda on Sunday launched an attack on the opposition parties, saying they were trying hard to save their dynastic politics.

"Be it the Sharad Pawar-led NCP(SP) or Uddhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena (UBT), the opposition parties are now trying hard to save their dynastic politics," Nadda said, addressing a rally in Maharashtra's Buldhana district.

Nadda said the BJP provided a stable government in the last 10 years and crucial issues like the practice of instant triple talaq and the Ram temple construction in Ayodhya were resolved under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership.

"We also provided hundreds of thousands of homes to the homeless people and increased the reach of various government schemes, offering a comfortable life to the rural people," he said.

"The BJP-led government also came up with the Citizenship (Amendment) Act that now offers Indian citizenship to persecuted Hindus, Parsis and Christians (from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan who have come to India)," Nadda said.

"After Modi came to power, politics of the country changed and became more accountable to the people. In a way, it has become more responsible," the BJP chief said.

Polling in the Buldhana and seven other Lok Sabha seats in Maharashtra will be held on April 26.

Meanwhile, addressing a rally in Malda, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said that no one can stop implementation of the CAA in West Bengal.

"Mamata didi says she will not allow CAA in her state. Why is she trying to hoodwink the people of West Bengal?" Singh asked.

He said the CAA is not meant to take away anyone's citizenship, but is a law for granting Indian citizenship to people displaced from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan on religious grounds.

The defence minister said that India is treated with respect under the Narendra Modi-led government, unlike under previous dispensations. "When we say something in an international forum, it is being listened to with respect," Singh said, adding that Modi's pledge is to turn India into a developed country by 2047.

'BJP provided a stable govt in last 10 years'

BJP national president JP Nadda said the party provided a stable government in the last 10 years and crucial issues like the practice of instant triple talaq and the Ram temple construction in Ayodhya were resolved under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership. The BJP-led government also came up with the Citizenship (Amendment) Act that now offers Indian citizenship to persecuted Hindus, Parsis and Christians (from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan who have come to India), he said.

Be it the Sharad Pawar-led NCP(SP) or Uddhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena (UBT), the opposition parties are now trying hard to save their dynastic politics – Jagat Prakash Nadda

THRISSUR

Local BJP deems Modi factor a plus for Suresh Gopi against 'Leader's Son'

RAVI SHANKAR

SURESH Gopi, the BJP's celebrity candidate for the Thrissur seat, is giving himself an afternoon makeover. He is stirring henna in a small brown bowl.

Actor politician or acting politician?

"Actor politician, of course," Gopi laughs out aloud.

Gopi, one of Kerala's best known and best loved actors, is on his second act, trying to win hearts and minds in Thrissur. His presence is unmissable, the difference being seeing him in election posters instead of film adverts. He projects himself as an Ivanhoe of the poor, and recalls the role he played as a Rajya Sabha MP to help constituents in economic distress. "Each time, I staged a sit-in without drinking a drop of water. Usually political leaders travelling in cars always drink water," he says sotto voce.

Gopi sees himself as a nationalist with a clear economic vision, quoting Amit Shah's direction on local cooperative bank policies when he visited Thrissur. He recalls the Congress blocking his bill. "I asked Shashi chettan (elder brother) why he voted against my bill, which would get the poor jobs. He arrogantly answered that the Congress has a duty to the alliance and so many cooperative banks would be affected," Gopi recalls.

The NDA candidate's house is on a quiet suburban street; a traditional Kerala home with gables, clay-tiled roof, wooden pillars supported by eaves, and large windows. Kerala seems to be returning to its original, but hybrid architectural ethos; the multicoloured concrete construction trend popular after the Gulf boom is slowly giving way to the aesthetics of the past. It would be premature and inaccurate to speculate about old Hindu building styles making a comeback, because rich Muslims seem to be hiring the same architects. The architecture of Gopi's campaign philosophy isn't communal. Muslim votes matter in Thrissur and go usually to the Congress.

IT'S NOT CLEAR IF THRISSUR WILL BE SURESH GOPI'S. HIS MAIN OPPONENTS ARE THE STREET SMART SUNIL KUMAR, A CPI COMRADE AND FORMER LDF MINISTER, AND UDF'S K MURALEEDHARAN, SON OF 'LEADER' K KARUNAKARAN, A POLITICAL GIANT WHO STRADDLED KERALA POLITICS

Suresh Gopi is a big name among Malayalis, having acted in over 300 films; hence why was not he, but the unknown Muraleedharan appointed a Central minister? Gopi answers, "I told the Prime Minister that I would rather remain the way I am because power builds walls, both small and big." He has no plans to quit acting. "My heart is filled with artistic, not political, aspirations. I need to follow my passion and I'm the sole breadwinner in my family." An honest admission for a politico. Gopi calculates he needs to make three or four movies a year, which will leave him 160 days for pro-poor political work. He claims he is the inspiration behind some of Modi's social schemes. He had called on Modi when the former was Gujarat CM. "I told him that women in rural India have to shove clay into their private parts for five days monthly. They don't have toilets either." He recalls Modi going into deep thought. "In 2014, women were given sanitary pads and toilets were built in every village," the actor grins as if all the dots have been connected.

Why does no political party in Kerala have a national face?

"It'll come. Once you see a successful person in the political space, the best of the best will join the mission. Be patient. The world is ours, not just the country."

It's not clear if Thrissur will be Gopi's. His main opponents are the street smart Sunil Kumar, a CPI comrade and former LDF minister, and UDF's K Muraleedharan, son of 'Leader' K Karunakaran, a political giant who straddled Kerala politics.

The Congress representative, in spite of his soft demeanour, gets ebullient when he sees crowds of admirers cheering him. He caustically remarks that Thrissur needs not a Central minister, but development. His chariot is a large platform on wheels loaded with chairs — Muraleedharan's own revolving chair, a podium, mikes, loudspeakers and a genset. The microphones loudly announce the arrival of the Leader's Son, invoking his phantom blessing.

Muraleedharan says the backwards, who are strong in Thrissur, are anti-BJP and so are the Muslims and Christians who backed the Congress. "I hear Christians saying Modi has the time to visit Kerala, not Manipur." Agrees his adversary, CPI candidate Sunil Kumar, who likes to mingle with the crowds and drink chai from common tea shops and be a people's comrade. "This election is a life and death issue for India. If Modi wins, he will make India a religion-based country."

It may be a mistake to wish religion away. The historic annual Thrissur pooram, a two-day extravaganza involving caparisoned elephants and crackers, was stopped by the police, which lathi-charged pilgrims. BJP is blaming the LDF for desecrating Kerala's ancient temple festival, which draws people from across the state.

As his 'rath' makes its colourful way through the inner roads festooned with BJP flags, lotus posters and candidates' visage, Gopi is in his element. Women line the roads and wait for him at the gate. A tall man in a blue tee had been waiting for nearly an hour. "I came all the way from Bahrain just to vote for Gopi," he smiles.

Local BJP thinks the Modi factor is a plus for Gopi; the PM attending his daughter's wedding has boosted his standing. An MP close to the PM can get things done for Thrissur.

It's time to get things done for Gopi too. The henna, which has darkened in its bowl, is ready for application. "It's organic. No chemicals," assures Gopi. For a man thinking of making an autobiographical political movie one day, it is dye another day.

EDITORIAL

When we own up our mistakes, some people interpret it as if we are wrong. They too commit mistakes

EMS Namboodiripad

INDIAN EXPRESS IS NOT AN INDUSTRY. IT IS A MISSION.

— Ramnath Goenka

IRAN-ISRAEL FACE-OFF AND THE ECONOMIC CHALLENGE FOR INDIA

WHEN an unprecedented Iranian swarm of over 300 ballistic and cruise missiles and drones created just a crater or two in Israel, it became a compelling endorsement for Tel Aviv's Iron Dome missile shield. The US did its bit by putting down a sizable chunk of those projectiles. It also shared real-time intel with Israel on the attack, as did the UK, Jordan and some other Gulf states, indicating the changing dynamics in West Asia. Bets were also off on the Israeli counterattack but it pragmatically showed the ability to strike in Iran's Isfahan - which houses nuclear assets - without making any significant impact on the ground. Mercifully, there were relatively calmer heads on both sides who played dangerous war games on each other's territory for public consumption without letting the situation get out of hand. Both countries have since indicated their intention to dial down the tension, so it will be back to business as usual in the Gaza blood sport. At last count, over 34,000 people have been killed in Gaza, most of them women and children as collateral damage. That the US is expected to announce its first-ever sanctions against an Israeli army battalion for human rights violations in the occupied West Bank, brought a degree of sanity in the otherwise depressing outlook.

This was the first time in decades that Iran launched a direct attack on Israel instead of employing its proxies like the Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Houthis in Yemen, and the Hamas in Gaza to do the dirty job. The provocation came from a missile strike on an Iranian consulate in Syria that left a few army generals and diplomats dead earlier this month. That attack was widely attributed to Israel though it disowned it. Iran also dramatically seized a container ship bound for Israel on the high seas. Among its crew were 17 Indian sailors, one of whom, a female trainee cadet, returned home safely.

There were fears of the Iran-Israel clash further inflaming global markets. Inflation is a bad word in over 60 poll-bound nations, including India, this year, but markets have settled. The cost of freight would stay up due to the vulnerable Red Sea corridor. But with the Ukraine war also contributing to geopolitical uncertainties, global economies would continue to roil. The challenge for India is to navigate a safe passage for its economy while urging warring nations to give peace a chance.

DECLARE A WAR ON CYBERCRIMES

IN the first two months of this year, Bengalureans lost a whopping ₹240 crore to cybercrime. If projections are to be believed, residents of the 'IT Capital of India' are likely to lose at least ₹1,440 crore by the end of this year. But real loss could be much more. Officials involved in curtailing this menace admit that given the rising trends of perpetrators using newer methodologies, it is becoming increasingly difficult to detect cybercrimes, allowing the perpetrators to go scot-free. There is a marked decline in detection rate, as per the data for Bengaluru. In 2022, detection rate stood at 22.8%, but dropped to 8.1% in 2023, before further plummeting to a mere 1.36% in January-February 2024. Within the first two months of 2024, Bengaluru saw 3,151 cybercrime cases registered, of which 828 cases involved job frauds, and only 11 were detected. According to the data, individuals have collectively lost over ₹63.8 crore to job fraud scams alone —a lure that easily attracts the unemployed who are desperately seeking lucrative jobs promised by the perpetrators, but ending up losing money, let alone not getting the promised job.

According to the India CyberCrime Coordination Centre (I4C), from April 2021 until now, ₹10,319 crore has been lost due to cyber crime attacks across India. Cybercriminals have a range of methods to target people — email and internet fraud; identity fraud (where personal information is stolen and used); theft of financial or card payment data; stealing and selling corporate data; cyber-extortion (ransom demands to prevent threatened attacks); cyber-extortion; hackers mining cryptocurrency by using resources they do not, a method called 'cryptojacking'; cyber-espionage (accessing government or company data); infringing copyright; illegal online gambling; sale of illegal items online; and soliciting, producing, or possessing child pornography for sale.

While cybercrime has been around for years, it has escalated lately with newer trends emerging to fox not just the gullible public, but also the cyber police. Awareness programmes to alert people against cyber predators seem to be not working. This calls for urgent steps on a war-footing by the Central and the state governments to set up special agencies dedicated to preventing and detecting cybercrimes. Otherwise, these criminals will continue to con innocent citizens and steal their hard-earned money.

QUICK TAKE

EYE ON THE FARM CRISIS

INDIA'S wheat production is expected to be 6 percent lower this month and government procurement of the crop is 37 percent lower than a year earlier. Paddy procurement plans have also been waylaid by market dynamics. Meanwhile, train traffic on the Ambala-Amritsar route was affected this week as farmers squatted on the tracks demanding the release of three compatriots arrested earlier by the Haryana police for protesting. These are significant issues in a country facing food inflation and running a free grains scheme for 80 crore people. Addressing the farm crisis should be the new government's first order of business.

Congress is having organisational issues, but it has national presence. The CPI(M) is a big player in Kerala; it is facing anti-incumbency. Meanwhile, the BJP is struggling to make its mark

ELECTORAL BATTLE OF THE THREE FRONTS IN KERALA

DR G GOPA KUMAR

Senior political scientist and former Vice Chancellor of the Central University of Kerala

Coalition politics has been the lifeline of Kerala since Independence as it began prior to modern Kerala, with Travancore-Cochin politics as the forerunner. Barring two governments out of 23, all the governments since 1956 were a coalition of like-minded parties. Therefore, Kerala became the cradle of coalition politics in India. Over the years, coalition politics has matured into a sharp bipolar politics providing little room for a third coalition or party to win seats or form a government in Kerala. Unlike in other states, winning party candidates need a higher share of votes in the peculiar bi-polar electoral battle. Nevertheless, ideology took a backfoot and pragmatism prevailed in the formation and running of coalition governments. Curiously, Kerala voters behaved contrastingly in assembly and Lok Sabha polls in most cases. Further, it has resisted the national trend on a number of occasions.

Three fronts and the puzzle

The 2024 general elections bring contrasting challenges to all three fronts in Kerala—the United Democratic Front (UDF), the Left Democratic Front (LDF) and the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). This paradox is also found in building a strong narrative. In this context, the primary dilemma of the BJP, to open its account under the first past the post system of elections, is how to gain partners in its coalition structure with a substantial mass base. Otherwise, it has to emerge itself with critical mass as a strong rival to the traditional coalitions, the UDF and LDF. This is an unlikely aspect due to the social and political history, demography and unique developments in the state.

Unlike in other parts of India, the Hindutva ideology has severe limitations in the plural setting of the state. Formulating a credible narrative for the BJP is certainly problematic in this situation. It has to face two formidable rivals, viz the ideologically strong Communists, and the electorally astute Congress and its Muslim League combination. No wonder the NDA never polled more than 15 percent of votes in Kerala. At the same time, the RSS has a strong base with an organisational network functioning throughout Kerala.

With the 18th Lok Sabha elections close on its heels, Kerala is poised for a triangular fight in all 20 constituencies, although the BJP is offering stiff fights only in seven seats that confuses the traditional major rivals led by the Congress and the CPI(M). Added to this bewilderment is the fact that the UDF and LDF are also fraught with structural and ideological challenges.

SOURAV ROY

Let us enter into this interesting scenario. Firstly, the Congress is not in power either in Kerala or in India and saves itself from any anti-incumbency factor. But it is organisationally weak, with leadership struggles at the state level and suffers from a dearth of funds. However, the presence of its national leader Rahul Gandhi vying for the Wayanad seat emboldens them like in 2019. But except the Muslim League, the Congress does not have a strong partner in the coalition. Further, a few of its ranks deserted and joined the BJP recently. Consequently, it suffered from the criticism that the party is playing a 'B' Team for the BJP. Secondly, it has two rivals to beat in electoral politics, the mighty LDF that has been in power in Kerala for the last eight years, and the emerging BJP in most of the constituencies.

It is an irony that both the Congress and the CPI(M) are part of the INDI Alliance but are traditional rivals in Kerala. Except the 'ideological' unity to fight the BJP, to save secularism in the country, there is nothing in common between the Congress and CPI(M) as evinced in the complex politics of Kerala. Given these contradictions, crafting a substantive narrative for the UDF and the Congress is a basic dilemma. Perhaps its strong point is that unlike the CPI(M), which is a weak force in national politics, the Congress continues as the major opposition party to the BJP and probably can lead the anti-BJP coalition either in power or in opposition soon after the polls.

Whereas the challenges before the LDF piloted by the CPI(M) are numerous. The CPI and the CPI(M) are contesting 90 percent of the seats in Lok Sabha, allowing limited roles for the smaller parties in the coalition (structurally, the LDF has more strength due to the presence of a number of smaller parties). But the most challenging factor before them is how to build a strong narrative that is focused on attacking both the Congress and BJP. The former is a partner of the non-BJP alliance while the latter is an ideological rival. To win more seats, it has to appeal for support not only from party ranks but also build credibility and confidence among the Muslim and Christian communities, who together constitute more than 45 percent of the state population.

Secondly, it has to overcome the anti-incumbency against its own government that has been in power since 2016. This is not an easy task because of a host of current factors—a plummeting economy, increasing unemployment, price rise, corruption charges against the chief minister and few party leaders, increasing violence in the campuses for which its student arm, the Students Federation of India, has been targeted, stand-off with the governor over the extreme politicisation of the academic sector, tacit support from an extremist Muslim organisation, the SDPI etc. Therefore, creating a credible narrative to address the Kerala electorate is more problematic for the LDF. Its attack on the BJP relating to the issues of secularism is equally competed by the UDF since the Congress is also apprehensive of the BJP on the topic of CAA, anti-minority policies, issue of Article 370, violation of the federal and secular spirit in the Constitution, etc. In its over-enthusiasm to attack the BJP, the LDF lost its sheen to project the inherent problems of the major rival, the UDF. While the Congress could easily highlight the fact that it is much stronger at the national level to take on the challenges brought by the BJP, a similar assertion cannot be made by the LDF.

Therefore, the crisis before the Left is much deeper than its rival in the national poll. Its electoral strength is limited at the national level and except in Kerala, it has not emerged as a major force to reckon with. On the whole, the LDF suffers from two counts—the anti-incumbency factor and the limited appeal restricted to the state in a hotly contested general election.

On the whole, the coalition puzzle is inescapable for all the three fronts in Kerala.

(Views are personal)

THRILLING REMINDERS OF SACRED GEOGRAPHY

RENUKA NARAYANAN

FAITHLINE

Last week, I was in Ayodhya for the darshan of Ram Lalla on Ram Navami—the first such celebration in the Janmasthan since 1528. After a blissful, easily accomplished darshan, I was taken to a remote corner of Ayodhya, away from the crowds, for a visit to the Sarayu river. It was a tricky walk down the broken, stone-littered steps of the ghat to the pale, ashy 'beach' below. I spent some time looking at the river, overwhelmed by the thought that Sri Rama took *jal samadhi* in it at the end of his avatar. What poignant memories did the Sarayu brim with, as did the Yamuna and Ganga. I carried away a strong sense of sacred geography. This got a strong, new impetus on the drive to Ayodhya airport when I suddenly spotted an overhead sign for Naimisharanya.

I was familiar with this name through the *Srimad Bhagavatam*, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. But I had never seen the name outside holy books. To suddenly see it marked as a real place was an unexpected thrill. I took to recalling whatever I had read about Naimisharanya and dived into its history when I got home.

Naimisharanya is located by the River Gomti in Sitapur district, 94 km from Lucknow. 'Naimisha' is taken by some to mean 'of a minute' since one story goes that a chakra given by Lord Brahma was thrown by a rishi and instantly sanctified this spot in that region. It finds mention as a dense forest in several ancient scriptures, including the *Mahabharata*. I read that Naimisharanya, meaning the Forest of Naimisha, or Neemsar as it's called today, is a place connected with Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu, Sati Devi and Lord Shiva. One ancient belief is it is where Lord Vishnu cut up Sati Devi's body into pieces. Her heart is said to have fallen at Naimisharanya, so it is a powerful Shakti Peeth. Many scriptures are said to have been shared here by rishis.

During the Vedic period, it was an important centre of education, apparently drawing 88,000 sages. Epic heroes are said to have visited there. It is said in the *Valmiki Ramayana* that Sri Rama performed the 'Ashwamedha Yagya' on the banks of the Gomti, that Lakshmana was appointed to protect the sacrificial horse while Rama left with his army for Naimisharanya. Yudhisthira and Arjuna visited this place in the *Mahabharata*.

In today's Naimisharanya, it seems a paved street encircling the town connects the important shrines, and visitors can cover the circuit in a couple of hours. There is an ongoing belief that if one performs penance for 12 years at this place, one transcends to Brahmaloka.

I felt quite wistful after seeing that signboard that I had to carry on to the airport instead of impulsively taking the turn to Naimisharanya. For those who mistakenly say that North India and South India are unconnected, let it be known that the Naimishnath Vishnu temple there, or Ranganatha Kot, is counted as one of the Divya Desha or 108 Vishnu temples across India that are revered in the *Naal Aayira Divya Prabandham* by the Aalvaar. These are 12 Vaishnava saints said to have lived between the sixth and ninth centuries in the Tamil region. The only woman among them is girl-saint Andal, pronounced 'Aandaal'.

WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

> The Aalvaars were 12 Vaishnava saints said to have lived between the sixth and ninth centuries in the Tamil region. The only woman among them is girl-saint Andal. They wandered from temple to temple singing hymns of adoration for Lord Vishnu

'Aalvaar', usually spelt Alvar or Alwar, means those who are immersed in the love of Lord Vishnu. Here I feel impelled to interpolate that Sanskrit, Hindi and Indian languages in general do not have a 'w' sound. They have a simple 'v' sound. So, I don't know why 'w' was ever used to spell Indian names when, as far as I know, it is phonetically alien. I am minded to strongly urge that we update our software on this and start replacing 'w' with 'v' in the future names of Indians yet unborn. Luckily, most people spell '*Bhagavad Gita*' with a 'v' and it is usually '*Srimad Bhagavatam*'.

Anyhow, to get back to the Aalvaar, they wandered from temple to temple singing hymns of adoration for Lord Vishnu. The 20th century poet-translator A K Ramanujan called his 1981 translation of poems by leading Aalvaar saint Nammaalvaar *Hymns for the Drowning*. Aalvaar compositions are apparently among the earliest hymns composed for Lord Vishnu in an Indian language. They number 4,000 poems, hence the name '*Naal Aayira*' which means 'four thousand' in Tamil. Their work and that of 63 Tamil Shaiva saints of that period called Naayanmaar, usually spelt Nayanmar, are said to have revitalised Sanatana Dharma in the Tamil region.

In the course of reading about Naimisharanya, I spent a happy hour listening to songs by the Aalvaar on YouTube. These songs are called '*Paasuram*'. One of my favourites is the composition *Pachhai Mamalai Pol Meini* by Thondaradipodi Aalvaar in the eighth century. There is a haunting version by renowned Carnatic singer Bombay Jayashri on YouTube with the English translation, if you would like to hear it. Such songs radiate an intense love for God all the way down the centuries.

I saw firsthand what an immense emotion that love is, not only in saint-poets but among many regular people even in present times. Looking at pilgrims in Ayodhya in beautiful regional dress from different parts, hearing their ardent cries, seeing tears and glowing expressions of happiness was a moving experience, far removed from strident modern-day politics. This was an ancient emotion that drew pilgrims from far and near with its own pure dynamic, rooted in the lore of the land.

So, it was not surprising, after all, that Naimisharanya, which has powerful beliefs attached to it, figured in the sacred geography drawn by the Aalvaars in the deep South centuries ago. Someday, if my luck holds, I will make it to Naimisharanya.

(Views are personal)

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MAILBAG

WRITE TO: letters@newindianexpress.com

Mindless promises

Congress is rolling out mindless promises, like its recent first-job guarantee to graduates, apart from baseless charges against the BJP. While Rahul is emphatic that BJP will get only 150 seats, he does not say how many seats his party will win. Job creation is not an independent activity and is a byproduct of growth and development.

Rajarao Kumar, email

Healthy democracy

In spite of the summer heat, more than 60% turnout for voting in the first phase of polls is encouraging. However, this number is not enough for a healthy democracy. At least 80 percent of voters should express their franchise. Only then can the victor be called a real victor.

P V Srinivas Sreelekha, Secunderabad

Extreme heat

Though the first phase of the polls went well, one wonders why the EC was apathetic about the extreme heat that voters had to face. This is the main reason for laggard polling in many parts, especially in Tamil Nadu. The EC should have arranged facilities like shelters, seats, anti-dehydration measures and health drinks for voters. It has time to introspect and work out these kinks for the remaining phases.

Manoharan Muthuswamy, Ramanathapuram

Performance troubles

At a time when M S Dhoni is the driving force for Chennai Super Kings, the top order failed to inspire the team. The roles played by openers and more so by middle order and current captain Ravindra Jadeja was found wanting. If Jadeja is a good fielder, he should be kept as the 12th man instead of as a part of the playing XI.

C K Ramani, Chennai

Rain predictions

In a couple of weeks, Bengaluru and other parts of Karnataka are expected to receive heavy rainfall. Have the authorities concerned actively desilting and deepening lakes and other water bodies so as to store enough rain water? Hope they have not ignored it due to election fever.

R Kasthurirangan, Bengaluru

Produce proof

Ref: *Onus lies with EC to prove EVM reliability* (Apr 20). The opposition led by Rahul Gandhi keeps harping on their cliched assertion that it has no trust in EVMs under the BJP rule. In ample measure, the Election Commission has demonstrated on different occasions that the EVM system is foolproof. Now the allegation should end, or the Court should ask the opposition to produce evidence.

P Mangalachandran, Kannur

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POSTS OF THE DAY

Jagat Prakash Nadda @JPNadda
On one side there is Modi ji who is engaged in taking the country forward. On the other side is the INDI alliance which is busy saving the family and the corrupt

Rahul Gandhi @RahulGandhi
The Modi government, through its policies, wants to weaken the Railways and prove it 'incompetent' so that it can get an excuse to sell it to its friends

Akhilesh Yadav @AkhileshYadav
News that Arvind Kejriwal is being denied insulin to control his rising sugar in jail is unbelievable. He has a right to health

Tejashwi counters Nitish's 'too many kids' jibe at Lalu

RAMASHANKAR @Patna

FORMER Bihar deputy chief minister and RJD leader **Tejashwi Yadav** on Sunday took a dig at Chief Minister and JD(U) president Nitish Kumar for the latter's remarks against his father Lalu Prasad over having many children.

Talking to media persons on the sidelines of Khagaria sitting MP Choudhary Mehboob Ali Kaiser joining the RJD, the former deputy chief minister said that he took Nitish Kumar's remarks about his family as blessings. "Such personal remarks will not help people of Bihar," he added.

"Nitish Kumar is elder to us and we have always respected him. I will continue to do so. Let him say whatever he wants. Whatever he would say is going to be a blessing for us. All I want to say is making personal attacks will not help people of state in any manner," he remarked.

In response to a media query, Tejashwi said that Nitish Kumar has virtually been hijacked by four-five people. "I will write a book and explain all these things. It's not the first time that he has said something about our family. He has made such comments during 2020 assembly elections as well," he said.

Tejashwi said that he would pray for the chief minister's good health and happy life. "It's not our culture to belittle or counter someone who has been a father figure to us," he told the media.

Notably, On Saturday, while campaigning in Kathiaron Nitish kicked up a controversy when without taking names, he took a jibe at RJD supremo Lalu Prasad for having so many children. Lalu-Rabri has nine children — two sons and seven daughters. Two of their daughters — Misa Bharti and Rohini Acharya — are in the fray from Patliputra and Saran Lok Sabha seats.

Earlier, Choudhary Mehboob Ali Kaiser, Rashtriya Lok Janshakti Party MP from Khagaria, joined RJD in presence of Tejashwi Yadav and other senior leaders.

Kaiser was not happy with RLJP-led by Pashupati Kumar Paras over denial of ticket for Lok Sabha polls.

Buzz over Rahul, Priyanka from Amethi, Rae Bareli

Cong declares 11 more candidates; 9 from Andhra, 2 from J'khand

PREETHA NAIR @New Delhi

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge with party leader Sonia Gandhi during the Central Election Committee meeting in New Delhi on Sunday | PTI

THE Congress on Sunday announced 11 more candidates for the Lok Saha polls amid intense speculation that former party president Rahul Gandhi will file a nomination to contest the Lok Sabha polls from Uttar Pradesh's Amethi after the second phase of elections, which is slated for April 26.

Gandhi is seeking a mandate for the second time from Kerala's Wayanad, which is going to polls in the second phase. It was also speculated that Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra will make her electoral debut from the party's Uttar Pradesh stronghold of Rae Bareli, a seat earlier held by her mother Sonia Gandhi.

The Congress Central Election Committee, which met earlier in the day, was expected to decide on candidates for Haryana, the remaining seats in Bihar, Punjab, and the crucial seats Amethi and Rae Bareli in UP. However, sources said that the UP seats were not on the agenda of the meeting. The meeting was chaired by party chief Mallikarjun Kharge and attended by former party chief Sonia Gandhi, senior leaders Salman Khurshid and Ambika Soni, among others.

Several names were discussed for Punjab and Bihar and a final decision on key seats was left for the Congress president to take, the sources said. They added that the next list of candidates would be announced "very soon".

While the Congress is contesting all the 13 seats in Punjab, in Bihar it is set to field candidates on nine seats and is part of the Mahagathbandhan formation with RJD and the Left parties.

Later, the party released the names of nine candidates for Andhra Pradesh seats and two candidates for Jharkhand Lok Sabha constituencies. The party will field Yashashwini Sahay from the Ranchi seat.

Though the CEC did not discuss Amethi and Rae Bareli seats, the sources said that Rahul Gandhi is likely to file the nomination for Amethi, after April 26.

Last week, Gandhi said he would abide by his party's decision on Amethi's candidature.

At a joint press conference with Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, Gandhi said, "On Amethi, the party will decide. Whatever order I get, I will abide by that. In our party, these decisions are taken in the CEC meeting".

Though Gandhi represented Amethi for three straight terms earlier, in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, he was defeated by Union Minister Smriti Irani by over 50,000 votes.

Speaking to this newspaper, Congress leader Dinesh Singh said that both seats are considered bastions of the Gandhi family and the state units of the party have demanded that the siblings contest from there. "We are confident that they will contest. There is anger against the current MP and the wind is in our favour," he said.

In Jalore-Sirohi, BJP faces tough challenge from within

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

THE 'local versus outsider' debate initially dominated the discourse, given Lumbaram's Sirohi origins. However, victories in the past by outsiders from this seat, such as Buta Singh and Sushila Laxman Bangaru, diluted that narrative.

Both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah have amplified the campaign for Lumbaram. Modi's rally in the constituency and Shah's persistent targeting of Ashok Gehlot indicate the high stakes involved in retaining Jalore-Sirohi.

Social media has also played its part, with contrasting narratives gaining traction. Videos highlighting Lumbaram's modest background have gone viral, while the Gehlot family's campaign efforts, including the involvement of Vaibhav's mother, daughter and wife Himanshi Gehlot, have been widely shared. A viral video showed Himanshi seeking blessings from Lumbaram at a local wedding. Recently, Himanshi issued a statement announcing that she has bought a house in Jalore and started her kitchen there. It was an oblique indication that Vaibhav intends to reside in Jalore for good so as to nullify the outsider tag.

The BJP's challenge is not just limited to the electoral dynamics but also the internal factionalism and resentment within the party. Devji Patel's supporters are reportedly disgruntled, fuelling speculation of factionalism.

Anti-incumbency against Patel and local grievances about underdevelopment were instrumental in the party opting for a fresh face.

On the Congress side, Ashok Gehlot's active involvement in Vaibhav's campaign is evident. Gehlot has been highlighting promises for the region's development, emphasising his government's achievements in education, health, infrastructure and agriculture. He has also sought to address the concerns of various communities, such as Rajpurohit Samaj, Jangid Samaj, and Prajapats to broaden Vaibhav's support base.

The Mali community, which has a significant electoral sway in Jalore-Sirohi, could play a decisive role. Vaibhav belongs to the community and Ashok Gehlot's influence in the region could tilt the balance in Congress's favour. However, the BJP's traditional vote bank and the substantial margin of victory in the last elections are challenges the Congress needs to overcome.

Amit Shah recently took a dig at Ashok Gehlot for concentrating only on Jalore-Sirohi while ignoring the rest of Rajasthan. "The son is going to lose the election by a huge margin," Shah said, referring to Vaibhav. But the low turnout in the first phase of polls in the state is a matter of concern for the BJP leadership, which is trying to mobilise voters for the crucial second phase.

The outcome of this election will have significant implications for both parties. A victory for Vaibhav would mark the beginning of his formal political journey, strengthening Ashok Gehlot's position within the Congress. But a loss would intensify attacks on Gehlot and weaken his standing, both within and outside the party.

Despite losing power in the state, Ashok Gehlot remains a formidable leader in the Congress. His potential role at the national level and the ongoing power struggle with Sachin Pilot have added another layer of interest in the Jalore-Sirohi contest.

Vaibhav is also likely to retain his sway, says Narayan Bareth, senior journalist and former professor at Haridev Joshi Journalism University. "Vaibhav's loss in one election doesn't signify the end of his political journey. He has his entire life ahead of him. He has built a strong presence here, and the benefits of that will always be evident. Vaibhav has traversed from village to village, establishing his identity among various castes. His own Mali community, which holds significant influence in the region, will always provide him with a solid political base in Jalore," he adds.

'Social media plays a role'

Social media has also played its part, with contrasting narratives gaining traction. Videos highlighting Lumbaram's modest background have gone viral, while the Gehlot family's campaign efforts, including the involvement of Vaibhav's mother, daughter and wife Himanshi Gehlot, have been widely shared

Modernity will remain the country's body, spirituality its soul, says Modi

PARVEZ SULTAN @New Delhi

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said India's strength to envision centuries and millennia and its farsighted approach have made it the longest-living civilization and a haven for humanity.

"It is India which thinks not for self but for all and believes in everyone. It is India which not only talks about traditions but also policies. It is India which talks about the universe in the body, Brahma in the world, and Shiva in the living being," Modi said at the inauguration of the 2550th Bhagwan Mahaveer Nirvan Mahotsav at Bharat Mandapam.

The Prime Minister said humanity is expecting peace from India in these times of conflict and this growing profile is due to its cultural image, growing capabilities, and foreign policy. "Today we put forward the principles of truth and nonviolence with full confidence in the global fora. We tell the world that the solution to the global problem is found in the ancient Indian culture and tradition. This is why India is making a place for itself as 'Vishwa Bandhu' in a divided world," he said.

Modi also underlined that India is proof that it becomes impossible to stop a nation when the feeling of self-respect awakens. "For India, modernity is its body, spirituality is its soul. If spirituality is removed from modernity, anarchy is born," he added.

"We never attack other countries to win over them; we have overcome our shortcomings by improving ourselves. That is why difficult times have come and in every era some sage or the other has appeared to guide us. Great civilizations ended, but India found its own way," the PM said.

Paying tributes to Acharya Vidyasagarji Maharaj, he recalled his recent meeting with him and said his "blessings are still guiding us." Modi noted the initial phase of Amrit Kaal when the nation was working towards a golden century of independence. He also noted the 75th year of the Constitution and the festival of democracy that will decide the future direction of the nation.

"Amrit Kaal is not merely a resolution but a spiritual inspiration allowing us to live through immortality and eternity," . Modi also released a commemorative stamp and coin on the occasion.

Heat wave spell in east India to continue for 5 days

JITENDRA CHOUBEY @New Delhi

A searing heatwave gripped major parts of India with maximum temperatures ranging from 43 degrees Celsius to 46°C in many regions, especially East India. The India Meteorological Department on Sunday forecast severe heatwave spell over East India during the next five days.

In North India, Bulandshahar sizzled at 44°C and Jharkhand's Bhargora at 46 °C, according to IMD bulletin. Odisha, Jharkhand, Bihar and a few pockets of eastern Uttar Pradesh and Vidharbha have been experiencing heatwaves for the past one week.

"It will continue like this for another week. A severe heatwave condition will prevail over Gangetic West Bengal, Jharkhand and few pockets of Odisha," IMD said.

A heatwave is declared when temperature increases to 40°C in plains, 37°C in coastal areas and 30°C in hilly regions with a departure from normal of at least 4.5°C. A severe heatwave is declared with departures from normal of at least 6.5°C.

Gangetic West Bengal is on the boil where departure of temperatures from normal had been ranging from 4.5°C to 7.6°C in different districts. In Odisha, departure of temperatures from normal had been ranging from 1.4°C to 6.1°C. **(See table)**.

A newsreader in the Kolkata branch of Doordarshan fainted during on air reporting. The Odisha government on Sunday announced summer vacation for school students from April 25. Bangladesh also closed schools and colleges due to heatwave. Soaring temperature has also been impacting the general election process as the first phase recorded low turnout.

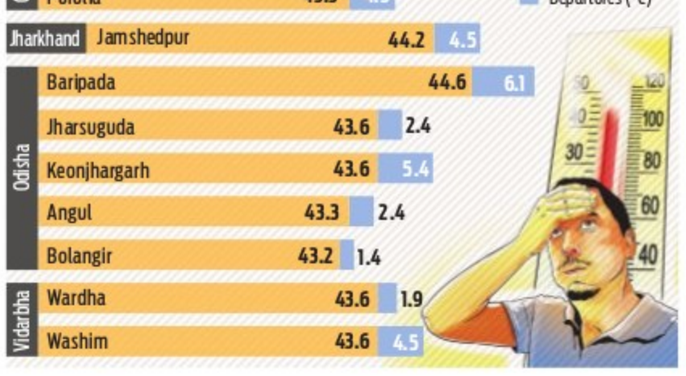
Experts say rising temperature is one of the reasons for lower turnout. The Election Commission has already issued an advisory urging voters to take precautions.

Central and southern India have also been seething under soaring temperatures. The maximum temperatures observed in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha and Gangetic West Bengal on Saturday were above normal. The departure of temperatures from normal had been ranging from 3.1°C to 7.6°C.

On Sunday, Baripada and Naupada in Odisha recorded 44.6°C and 44°C maximum temperature, Bankura and Panagarh in West Bengal reported 44.5°c and 44°C, Bahargora and Jamshedpur in Jharkhand boiled at 46°C and 44.2°C.

Barackpore in West Bengal reported 43.7 °C on Sunday, which was 7.6°C departure from normal. Rajnandgaon in Chhattisgarh reported 43 °C on Saturday, which was 7.6 °C departure from normal.

"This is an established pattern that the eastern region experiences heatwaves first," said a scientist. Hot weather will gradually move towards Northwest India and parts of east Uttar Pradesh will experience heatwave conditions. Delhi-NCR, Haryana and Rajasthan will experience maximum temperatures in the range of 38-42°C by newxt week, IMD said. "Perhaps the typical heatwave is still far away due to regular western disturbances," said Mahesh Palavat of Skymet Weather, a private weather solution agency.



POWER GAMES

SHAHID FARIDI
The writer is Resident Editor TNIE, New Delhi.
Follow him on X@Shahid_Faridi_

Fresh Start

NAVY CHIEF HARI KUMAR TO GET NEW ASSIGNMENT

The Union government is likely to re-engage Navy chief Admiral R Hari Kumar, under whose direct supervision Prime Minister Narendra Modi dived into the Arabian Sea to pray at the location where the underwater city of Dwarka is believed to have existed off the coast of Gujarat. The Prime Minister was accompanied by the elite Marine Commandos (MARCOS) and divers of the Indian Navy in his spiritual journey. Admiral Kumar is set to retire on April 30 this year and the government has named Vice Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi as his successor. According to sources, Admiral Hari Kumar may be given an ambassadorial assignment. He is likely to be sent to New Zealand. Due to the current general elections in India, the process of Admiral Hari Kumar's reappointment is likely to start after June 4 and may culminate by August.

Aiming for Sky

MUSK USES EV CLOUT TO ENTER SPACE SECTOR

Elon Musk, who is the owner of not only the world's largest electric vehicle (EV) maker Tesla, but also the largest private spaceflight company SpaceX, has been locked in a hard bargain with the government to allow him entry into India's space programme. According to sources, Musk is interested more in partnering with India in its space programme than in establishing an EV unit. The government, on the other hand, wants him to start with EV. Sources said Musk wants more clarity in the FDI policy announced by the government in February this year. This policy allows 100% FDI in certain segments of the space industry. Musk has agreed to bring Tesla cars in a semi knocked-down condition after the government's recent decision to lower the import duty on EVs. He is, however, leveraging Tesla's position as a bulwark against the Chinese EV makers to gain more generous investment conditions in the space segment. His decision to postpone India visit was due to business considerations and not linked to politics as some Congress leaders would like people to believe.

INDIA Trouble

LALU, JMM PRESSURE CONG TO CHANGE CANDIDATES

There is trouble in the INDIA bloc in Jharkhand. RJD and JMM are not happy with the choice of Congress candidates in Chatra and Godda Lok Sabha constituencies. Congress had announced K N Tripathi as its candidate from Chatra and Deepika Pandey Singh from Godda. Tripathi is considered a weak candidate by Congress allies JMM and RJD. RJD chief Lalu Yadav has been putting pressure on Congress to field Arun Singh, while JMM wants former minister Girinath Singh fielded from the constituency. Sources said that the issue of these two seats was raised with Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge at Ranchi today by the JMM and RJD leaders. Kharge, who was in Ranchi for a joint INDIA group public meeting, has promised to get back after discussing the issue with state and central party leaders in charge of Jharkhand. According to sources, Congress may change at least one, if not both the candidates. Four-time MLA Pradip Yadav is the frontrunner to replace Deepika Pandey Singh from Godda.

INDIA	Max	Min		Max	Min
Ahmedabad	36	26	Mumbai	34	27
Bhopal	37	24	Panaji	32	26
Jaipur	36	23	Patna	40	26
Amritsar	33	17	Lucknow	37	23
Chennai	35	27	Port Blair	33	25
Kolkata	40	27	Imphal	31	19
Srinagar	21	07	Chandigarh	34	18

Pappu Yadav adds intrigue to Purnea puzzle

As Independent, he can queer pitch for RJD, JD(U), the main rivals in polls due April 26

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @Purnea

CHALLENGES thrown by the sweltering summer heat have failed to dampen electioneering in one of the high-profile Lok Sabha seats in Bihar's Purnea, scheduled to go to the polls in the second phase on April 26.

HEAVY WEIGHTS IN FRAY

Named after the country's oldest Shakti temple- the Puran Devi temple, Purnea is gearing up for a tough triangular contest among Rajesh Ranjan alias Pappu Yadav (Independent) against Santosh Kushwaha (JD-U) and Bima Bharti (RJD). This would be Bharti's first election after ditching JDU for the RJD.

Wife of a muscleman Awadhesh Mandal, Bima Bharti, is five-time MLA from the Rupauli assembly seat in Purnea and had served as minister of sugarcane industries in the Nitish government earlier.

Being home to about 40% of the Muslim population, the district holds a significant place in the election, leading to all major parties putting in their political might to ensure the victory of their respective candidates.

POLL STRATEGIES

Bihar's main Opposition determined to eat into Nitish Kumar's (JD-U) extremely backward classes vote bank -- has fielded Bima Bharti, who belongs to a highly backward caste. But, three-time former MP from Purnea Pappu Yadav has jumped into the fray as an independent and turned the contest into a tough triangular.

As per poll experts, Yadav is doing nothing but queering pitch for both sitting and RJD-fielded candidates. Echoes of the high-decibel canvassing can be felt across the constituency in which 90% of people depend on agricultural work or migrate to other states for their livelihood. Hardly any wall of houses or public places can be seen donning posters of candidates carrying poll slogans of 'Berozgari hatao' or 'Modi ki Guarantee'.

CATCH-22 SITUATION

The people appear to have been caught in a Catch-22 situation as the constituency heads towards a direct and t ough triangular contest with Pappu Yadav in the fray as an independent. Recently, Pappu Yadav, in anticipation of being nominated as party candidate from his home turf Purnea, had merged his party, the Jan Adhikar Party(JAP), with Congress, but as an ill-luck would have it, Congress in seat-sharing under Mahagathbandhan had to leave this high-profile seat to the RJD quota. Resolved not to sit idle, heavyweight Rajesh Ranjan decided to contest as an independent. Situated about 200km from Patna, adjacent to Nepal and Bengal, the Purnea LS seat is dominated by voters primarily dependent on agriculture and migrating to other cities.

But this time around, migrated voters not willing to return to vote has left the candidates worried.

VOX POPULI

Raghuvir Das, who returned from Chennai a few days ago with his wife to vote in Dhandha, said, "Those who are out of state for earning are not willing to return to vote as they find it a useless exercise. "Koi kuch nahi karta garbo ke bas vote leta hai (No one does anything for the poor, just they want votes)", he remarked, claiming that only 2 -3% of migrated labourers are expected to return to Purnea this time.

While Yadav, once a muscleman, is projecting himself as the "son of the soil", sitting MP Santosh Kushwaha (JD-U) is seeking his third term on the planks of "developments done" and "developments to be done" as Modi and Nitish Ki Guarantee. The RJD candidate is banking on MY equation as well as the mobilisation of impoverished sections and voters of OBCs. "Lalu is the leader who is heard now, and Bima Bharti has been fielded as his choice candidate, so we would not go with any other. Jo saheb ki choice wo sab hum sab ka" (Lalu's choice is our choice in this election), remarked Ramanand Yadav and Murli Mahto- both rural voters are working as masons in Purnea town.

Lord Ram is revered here, but voting on the temple issue is not as much accepted as calculated by the NDA, especially since the BJP think-tank might have been thinking to cash on it this election. Purnea has emerged as a single LS seat, witnessing triangular contests and attracting almost all senior leaders from the ruling NDA and Opposition to ensure the victory of their candidates.

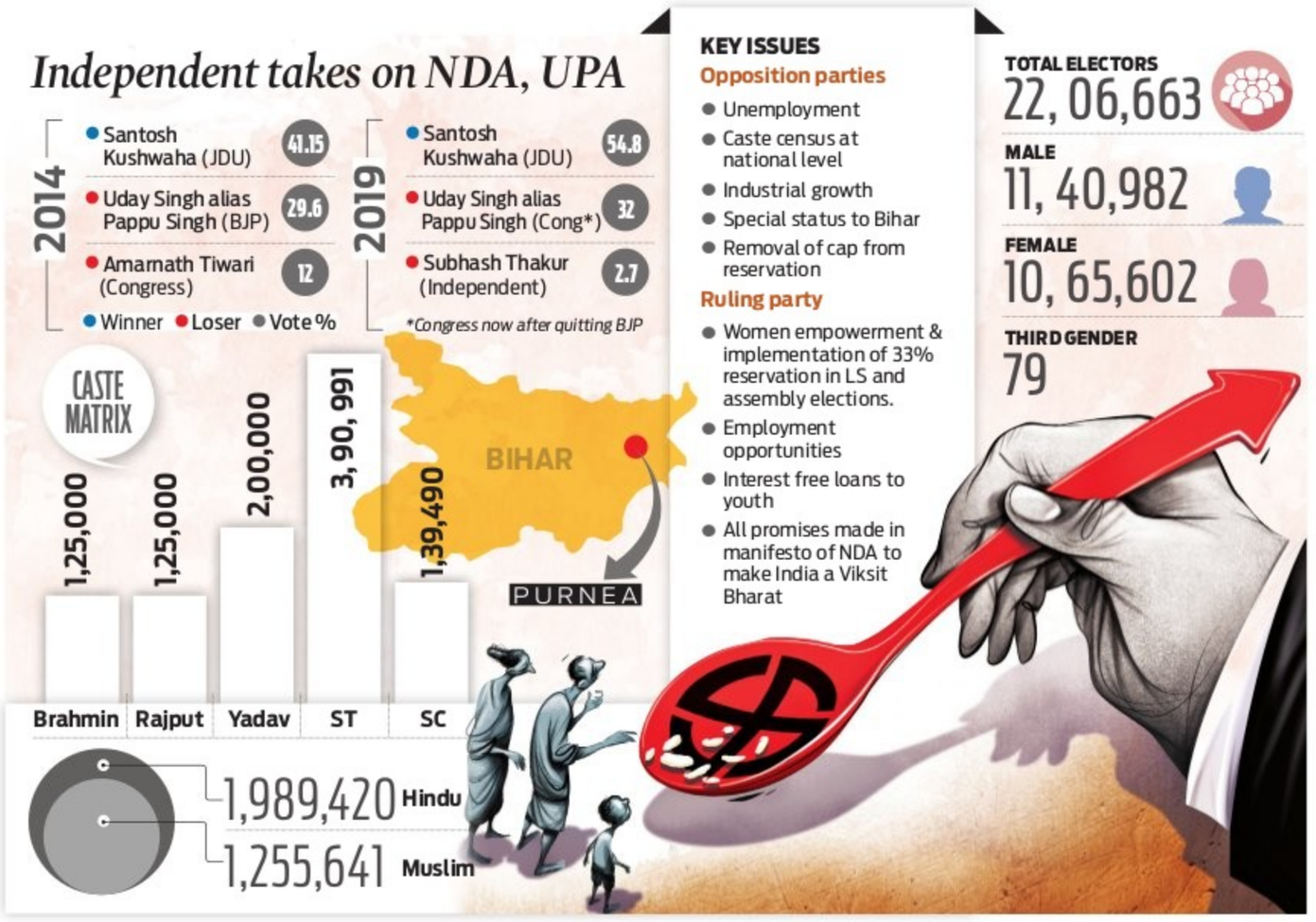
"Purnea is everything to me. I live for Purnea and will die for it", Pappu Yadav told the media while Kushwaha claimed to have done a lot for Purnea and much more is in the pipeline. He runs a campaign with a poll catchline on social media, "Pranam Purnea' (Salute to Purnea), with the promise of an airport, the primary demand of people here.

CASTE EQUATION

Purnea has around 2 lakh Yadav voters followed by 1.25 lakh Brahmins and 1.25 lakh Rajputs even as Muslims account for 40% of the total population.

OVER TO THE VOTER

Though Nitish Kumar, Tejashwi Yadav and many other senior leaders of Congress including, Rahul Gandhi, have so far visited and camped for their respective candidates, the people caught in a triangular contest are yet to decide their pick.



ELECTION 2024

EVMs under strict surveillance

All Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) used in Mizoram Lok Sabha polls have been sealed and kept in designated strong rooms under strict surveillance, a senior election official said on Sunday. Polling for the lone Lok Sabha seat in the northeastern state was held on April 19, while the votes will be counted on June 4. The election department has set up 13 polling centres, including 3 in Aizawl, across the state. There are 40 counting halls, one each for one assembly segment.

Cong releases manifesto for Goa

The Congress released a manifesto for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections in Goa, promising to protect the environment and ensure the resumption of mining in the coastal state. The Congress is contesting the two seats in the state under the banner of the anti-BJP coalition INDIA. It has fielded Ramakant Khalap from North Goa constituency, while Viriato Fernandes has been nominated from South Goa. The party has also promised to ensure the resumption of mining in the state.

9 candidates with criminal cases

Nine candidates from Assam, including two women, in five constituencies which will go to polls in the second phase of the ongoing Lok Sabha elections, have declared that they are facing criminal cases. AIUDF has two contestants, the BJP and the Gana Suraksha Party have one each while the remaining six are independent candidates. AIUDF's Aminul Islam, BJP's Suresh Bora and independents Sikha Sarma and Abu Eusuf Md Raihan Uddin are in the fray in central Assam's Nagaon constituency.

BIHAR

Oppn return to power can cause poverty, warns Shah

RAMASHANKAR @ Patna

UNION Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday launched a blistering attack on INDIA bloc saying the latter wanted to take back Bihar to 'lantern era' as the state was converted into a 'jungle raj' under the Lalu-Rabri government earlier.

He charged the Congress-led opposition with being soft on terror and indifferent towards the uplift of deprived castes, and alleged that their return to power could cause "riots, atrocities and poverty".

Addressing an election rally in Bihar's Katihar Lok Sabha constituency, Shah said it was NDA government led by chief minister Nitish Kumar that pulled Bihar out from 'jungle raj' (lawlessness) and put development work in the state on track.

He alleged that the poor, backward, and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) were all subjected to atrocities during the RJD-Congress rule. Ever since NDA government came to power and Nitish became CM, atrocities against everyone have stopped, he added.

He said the NDA government under the leadership of Nitish Kumar provided electricity to every village and every house and also built roads, but Opposition 'INDI Alliance' wants to take Bihar back to the 'lantern era' and oppress people belonging to OBCs.

The Union minister said that PM Narendra Modi has brought a huge transformation in the lives of the poor. He has worked towards annihilating 'parivarvaad' (dynastic politics), casteism, and appeasement.

Reminding people of the Lalu-Rabri regime, Shah said the RJD chief and Congress were together fighting the election against BJP and JD(U), which have done a lot for state's development and state was progressing under 'double engine' government.

"Today he (Lalu) is sitting with the Congress party, I want to tell him (Lalu) that the same Congress party had opposed backward classes, suppressed the Kakasaheb Kalelkar Commission report, and opposed the Mandal Commission report as well," Shah said.

"We made a poor tea seller's son the PM. Modi ji has made 35% backward and extremely backward MPs as ministers in his cabinet and has worked on adding 16 new castes to OBC. We gave free ration to over 80 lakh people, built more than 12 crore toilets," Shah added.

'Backward castes, poor subjected to atrocities'

Union Home Minister Amit Shah alleged that the poor, backward, and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) were all subjected to atrocities during the RJD-Congress rule. Ever since NDA government came to power and Nitish became CM, atrocities against everyone have stopped, he added. He said the NDA government under the leadership of Nitish Kumar had provided electricity to every village and every house and had also built roads, but Opposition 'INDI Alliance' wants to take Bihar back to the 'lantern era' and oppress people belonging to OBCs.

MADHYA PRADESH

Rahul falls sick, Kharge raises fears of change in Constitution

ANURAAG SINGH @Bhopal

FORMER Congress chief Rahul Gandhi had to skip the Lok Sabha poll campaign in Madhya Pradesh, after reportedly falling ill suddenly on Sunday.

It was the current party president Mallikarjun Kharge who addressed the rally in the Vindhya region's Satna constituency, which will be among those seats which vote on April 26.

Hitting out at PM Narendra Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah, Kharge said democracy would end in the country, if the "Modi-Shah sarkar" returned to power.

He also claimed that they (Modi regime) will change the Constitution, if voted to power for the third time.

"The PM says that even Dr BR Ambedkar couldn't change the Constitution today. But why does his party MPs and MLAs reiterate that two-thirds majority for the party in the LS polls was a must for changing the Constitution. If you want to keep alive the Constitution, the right to vote for women, labourers and farmers, then vote for Congress," Kharge said.

Kharge also attacked Modi-Shah for taking those into the BJP fold, who were "corrupt" till they were in other parties.

"It seems Shah has a big laundry with a washing machine which washes all those who are corrupt, before inducting them into the BJP."

The Congress president was particularly critical of the Modi government for failing to check the price rise and unemployment. "Ten years back Modi had promised Rs 15 lakh to every person, two crore jobs every year, which means 20 crore jobs in a decade. How many here are among those who got those 20 crore jobs?"

The Satna seat of the Vindhya region is among the two seats of the region bordering eastern UP, which will vote in the second phase on April 26.

Fourth-time BJP MP Ganesh Singh is pitted against second-time Congress MLA Siddharth Kushwah in a rerun of the 2023 Satna seat assembly polls, where Kushwah had defeated Singh by less than 6,000 votes. Making the contest interesting is ex-BJP MLA Narayan Tripathi, who is contesting as a BSP candidate.

The country's unemployment rate is the highest in the past 45 years but there is no account of it, he said. Kharge also claimed that the country's assets like airports, roads are being sold to 'two buyers'.

'Modi govt fails to create jobs, check price rise'

The Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge was particularly critical of the Modi government for failing to check the price rise and unemployment. "Ten years back Modi had promised Rs 15 lakh to every person, two crore jobs every year, which means 20 crore jobs in a decade. How many here are among those who got those 20 crore jobs?" Hitting out at PM Narendra Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah, Kharge said democracy would end in the country, if the "Modi-Shah sarkar" returned to power. He also claimed that they will change the Constitution

MP's papers rejected, NDA gains advantage

PRASANTA MAZUMDAR @ Guwahati

The BJP-led NDA's poll prospects in Assam's Scheduled Tribe-reserved Kokrajhar seat have suddenly brightened after the Returning Officer (RO) rejected the nomination papers of two-time sitting MP Naba Kumar Sarania following scrutiny.

Recently, Sarania, who is a former leader of insurgent group United Liberation Front of Assam, had filed a writ petition in the Gauhati High Court challenging the striking down of his ST (Plains) status by the state-level scrutiny committee. The court, however, dismissed his petition on Thursday.

Returning Officer Pradeep Kumar Dwivedi told the media on Sunday that 16 candidates had filed their nomination papers and the nomination of Sarania was found to be defective.

Sarania's document was extremely doubtful, raising grave apprehensions about its genuineness. A person cannot hold two ST certificates — Pradeep Kumar Dwivedi, Returning Officer

"It is seen that Sri Naba Kumar Sarania has submitted an ST Certificate issued by All Assam Tribal Sangha, Nalbari District Unit, countersigned by the then Deputy Commissioner, Nalbari, wherein in the community field 'Boro' has been struck off and 'Rava' has been entered without any corresponding countersignature of the issuing authority," the RO wrote in an order.

He said there is not only "overwriting and crossing in the caste/community section" of the November 18, 1986 certificate, it has not also been signed or stamped at those specific spots by the certificate issuing authorities.

He observed that the document was extremely doubtful, raising grave apprehensions about its genuineness. He added that a person cannot belong to two different communities or hold two ST certificates of two different communities.

The development will surely embolden the NDA. The United People's Party Liberal (UPPL), an ally of the BJP, is contesting from the Kokrajhar seat as part of the understanding among the NDA partners. The contest is now expected between the UPPL and the Bodoland People's Front.

Sarania had won the elections the last two times riding on the polarisation of non-Bodo votes in his favour. This western Assam constituency falling under the Bodoland Territorial Region has over 60% non-Bodo voters.

GUJARAT

Candidature cancelled, Cong out of fray in Surat

DILIP SINGH KSHATRIYA @ Ahmedabad

THE candidature of Congress candidate from Surat Lok Sabha constituency Nilesh Kumbhani was rejected on Sunday after his three supporters who signed the nomination form complained to the district returning officer that their signatures were fake.

The nomination form of Suresh Padsala, the Congress' substitute candidate from Surat, was also invalidated, pushing Gujarat's principal opposition party out of the poll fray in the constituency.

In his order, returning officer Sourabh Pardhi said the four nomination forms submitted by Kumbhani and Padsala were rejected after prima facie discrepancies were found in the signatures of the proposers, and they did not appear genuine. "The proposers, in their affidavits, stated that they had not signed the forms themselves," Pardhi's order said.

Confirming the development, Congress' lawyer Babu Mangukiya said the next course of action will be to approach the High Court and Supreme Court. Dinesh Jodhani, the election agent of BJP candidate Mukesh Dalal, had objected to the nomination forms on Saturday, after which the returning officer granted time to the Congress candidate to appear before it to present his case.

2 killed and 6 injured in shooting at Memphis park party in the US

GLOBAL WEATHER

LR: Light Rain • HR: Heavy Rain • TDS: Thundershower • LC: Light Cloud • SNY: Sunny

Beijing	26	13	LC	Los Angeles	23	14	SNY
Colombo	33	27	LC	Melbourne	23	18	SNY
Dhaka	39	27	LC	Moscow	17	5	LC
Dubai	34	26	SNY	New York	17	6	SNY
Houston	23	14	TDS	Singapore	31	27	LC
Istanbul	21	15	LC	Toronto	11	7	LC
London	10	5	LC	Washington	18	6	LC

ISRAEL'S OVERNIGHT ATTACKS ON RAFAH KILL 18 CHILDREN

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says Tel Aviv will step up pressure on Hamas as this is the "only way" to bring back the hostages

RAFAH

ISRAELI strikes on the southern Gaza city of Rafah overnight killed 22 people, including 18 children, health officials said Sunday, as the United States was on track to approve billions of dollars of additional military aid to its close ally.

Israel has carried out near-daily air raids on Rafah, where more than half of Gaza's population of 2.3 million has sought refuge from fighting elsewhere. It has also vowed to expand its ground offensive against the Hamas militant group to the city on the border with Egypt despite international calls for restraint, including from the US. "In the coming days, we will increase the political and military pressure on Hamas because this is the only way to bring back our hostages and achieve victory. We will land more and painful blows on Hamas soon," PM Benjamin Netanyahu said in a statement. He didn't give details.

The first Israeli strike in Rafah killed a man, his wife and their 3-year-old child, according to the nearby Kuwaiti Hospital, which received the bodies. The woman was pregnant and the doctors managed to save the baby, the hospital said. The second strike killed 17 children and two women, all from an extended family, according to hospital records. Mohammed al-Beheiri said his daughter, Rasha, and her six children, the youngest 18 months old, were among those killed. Her husband's second wife and their three children were still under the rubble, al-Beheiri said. The Israel-Hamas war has killed over 34,000 Palestinians, according to local health officials, devastated Gaza's two largest cities and left a swath of destruction. Around 80 per cent of the territory's population have fled to other parts of the besieged coastal enclave.

The $26 billion aid package approved by the House of Representatives on Saturday includes around $9 billion in humanitarian assistance for Gaza, which experts say is on the brink of famine. The Senate could pass the package as soon as Tuesday, and President Joe Biden has promised to sign it immediately. The conflict, now in its seventh month, has sparked regional unrest pitting Israel and the US against Iran and allied militant groups across the Middle East.

Israel and Iran traded fire directly this month, raising fears of all-out war between the long-time foes. Tensions have also spiked in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. Israeli troops killed two Palestinians who the military says attacked a checkpoint with a knife and a gun near the southern West Bank town of Hebron early Sunday. *AP*

U.S. PLANS TO SANCTION IDF BATTALION

The Biden administration is slated to announce sanctions against the IDF's Netzah Yehuda battalion for alleged human rights abuses against Palestinians in the West Bank, the Axios news site reported, according to *The Times of Israel*. It would be the first time the US has ever taken such a step. The battalion has been at the center of several controversies in the past connected to right-wing extremism and violence against Palestinians, notably including the 2022 death of Omar As'ad, a 78-year-old Palestinian-American

Palestinian municipality workers clear the rubble in the West Bank refugee camp of Nur Shams, Tulkarem, on Sunday | AP

Iran leader tacitly acknowledges Tehran hit

JERUSALEM

IRAN's supreme leader on Sunday dismissed any discussion of whether Tehran's unprecedented drone-and-missile attack on Israel hit anything there, a tacit acknowledgment that despite launching a massive assault, few projectiles actually made through to their targets.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's comments before senior military leaders didn't not touch on the apparent Israeli retaliatory strike Friday on the central city of Isfahan, even though air defences opened fire and Iran grounded commercial flights across much of the country.

Iranian leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, right, speaks with senior military leaders in Tehran on Sunday | AP

Analysts believe both Iran and Israel, regional archrivals locked in a shadow war for years, are trying to dial back tensions following a series of escalatory attacks between them as Israel's war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip rages on and inflames the wider region.

Khamenei, 85, made the comments in a meeting attended by the top ranks of Iran's regular military, police and paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, a powerful force within its Shiite theocracy.

"Debates by the other party about how many missiles were fired, how many of them hit the target and how many didn't, these are of secondary importance," Khamenei said in remarks aired on television.

"The main issue is the emergence of the Iranian nation and Iranian military's will in an important international arena. This is what matters."

Satellite images analysed Saturday by *The Associated Press* showed the Iranian attack caused only minor damage at the Nevatim air base in southern Israel, including taking a chunk out of a taxiway that Israel quickly repaired.

Iran's attack came in response to a suspected Israeli strike on April 1 targeting a consular building next to the Iranian Embassy in Damascus, Syria, which killed two Guard generals and others.

"Today, thanks to the work done by our armed forces, the Revolutionary Guard, the army, the police, each in its own way, praise be to Allah the image of the country around the world has become commendable."

WAR WATCH

ISRAEL-GAZA: DAY 198

TOLL SO FAR

34,582

ISRAEL TO SUMMON SIX AMBASSADORS

Israel will summon ambassadors of countries that voted for full Palestinian UN membership at the Security Council on Thursday to lodge protests with them, The Times of Israel reported. Twelve countries backed a resolution recommending full Palestinian membership at the world body on Thursday and two – Britain and Switzerland – abstained, with the US wielding its veto to torpedo the measure. Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman Oren Marmorstein said the ministry would summon ambassadors of France, Japan, South Korea, Malta, Slovenia, and Ecuador "and a strong protest will be presented to them."

Pak finance minster says IMF team to visit in May

ISLAMABAD

PAKISTAN's Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has said that an IMF team is expected to visit Islamabad next month to negotiate a new long-term bailout package to secure a staff-level agreement for the cash-strapped country by mid-July. Speaking to the media after his week-long visit to Washington, the minister said the contours of the new International Monetary Fund programme will shape up later. "We will start getting into the granularity of the programme by mid-May," Aurangzeb said, *Dawn News* reported.

Cash-strapped Pakistan has made a formal request to the IMF to seek the next bailout package in the range of $6-$8 billion with the possibility of augmentation through climate financing. Addressing journalists at the Pakistan Embassy in Washington, Aurangzeb said that global lender's board of governors would convene to consider the last tranche of the current programme by the end of this month, with the final instalment released thereafter.Earlier, Aurangzeb said that Pakistan can repay its debt to Beijing only after completing the second phase of the multi-million dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

The minister's remarks followed discussions with key financial institutions like the IMF and World Bank, alongside senior US officials in Washington this week. Explaining his stance he said, "The CPEC was a champion project for Pakistan and a lot of infrastructure was created during its first phase. Now, what's supposed to happen was for us to go into CPEC Phase 2, which was and remains the way we monetise that infrastructure because that's where the special economic zones come in."

Muhammad Aurangzeb

The minister elaborated that through these special economic zones, Pakistan would attract further Chinese investment.

Emphasising the necessity of completing this process, the minister said: "There's a lot of discussion about how you are going to repay the debt, that's how it was supposed to happen." He expressed gratitude to the Chinese government and banks for their assistance in debt servicing and noted, "But ultimately, these debts have to be paid. And that's only going to be there when we get phase 2 going." *PTI*

Russia warns Pak of banning rice imports

KARACHI

RUSSIA has warned Pakistan that it would ban rice imports again if its phytosanitary concerns are not addressed in future consignments after a quarantine organism was detected in the rice consignment.

The warning came after Russia's Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance (FSVPS) issued a notification regarding violations of international and Russian phytosanitary requirements over a shipment of rice imported from Pakistan.

Dated April 2, the notification highlights the presence of a quarantine organism, 'Megaselia scalaris (Loew),' in the rice consignment. Pakistan's trade representative at its embassy in Russia was asked to carry out an immediate investigation into the matter.

The Russian authorities have written to the Pakistan embassy to prevent such violations and ensure all Pakistani rice exporters follow phytosanitary standards to ensure the safety of agricultural products traded between the two countries.

Russia had previously imposed a ban on rice imports from Pakistan in 2019. *PTI*

Landslide win for Muizzu in Maldives vote

Male: The party of Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu won control of parliament in a Sunday election landslide, results showed, with voters backing his tilt towards China and away from regional powerhouse and traditional benefactor India. Muizzu's People's National Congress (PNC) won 66 of the first 86 seats declared, according to the Elections Commission of Maldives results, already more than enough for a super-majority in the 93-member majlis, or parliament. The vote was seen as a crucial test for Muizzu's plan to press ahead with closer economic cooperation with China, including building thousands of apartments on controversially reclaimed land. The PNC and its allies had only eight seats in the outgoing parliament, with the lack of a majority stymieing Muizzu after his presidential election victory in September.

Ukraine lauds US aid package while Kremlin warns of further ruin

KYIV

UKRAINIAN and Western leaders on Sunday welcomed a desperately needed aid package passed by the US House of Representatives, as the Kremlin warned that passage of the bill would "further ruin" Ukraine and cause more deaths.

Ukrainian leaders and analysts say the long-awaited $61 billion military aid package — including $13.8 billion for Ukraine to buy weapons — will help slow Russia's incremental advances in the war's third year — but that more will likely be needed for Kyiv to regain the offensive. The House swiftly approved $95 billion in foreign aid for Ukraine, Israel and other US allies in a rare Saturday session as Democrats and Republicans banded together after months of hard-right resistance over renewed American support for repelling Russia's full-scale invasion.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who had warned that his country would lose the war without US. funding, said that he was grateful for the decision of U.S. lawmakers. Speaking on NBC's "Meet the Press," Zelenskyy said that the aid package would "send the Kremlin a powerful signal that (Ukraine) will not be the second Afghanistan."

The aid package will go to the U.S. Senate, which could pass it as soon as Tuesday. U.S. President Joe Biden has promised to sign it immediately. It still could take weeks for it to reach the front line, where it is desperately needed.

In Russia, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the decision "will make the US richer, further ruin Ukraine and result in the deaths of even more Ukrainians, the fault of the Kyiv regime."

"The new aid package will not save, but, on the contrary, will kill thousands," Leonid Slutsky, head of the Russian State Duma Committee on International Affairs, wrote on Telegram. *AP*

EXPRESS READ

7 people killed in Lanka during racing event

At least seven people, including a child, were killed and 23 others were critically injured in a mishap caused during a motor car racing event in Sri Lanka's Uva province on Sunday, police said. The accident happened when a competing car in the racing event held at the central hill resort of Diyathalawa veered off the track and collided with the spectators. The annual event was halted in 2019 after bomb attacks. PTI

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public are hereby informed that my client Mythili Muralidharan, aged about 63 years, wife of Late L. Muralidharan, residing at #G-12, Keerthi Heights, Belthur, Kadugodi, Bangalore - 560 067 (Karnataka), India, hereby informs that herself and her spouse Mr. L. Muralidharan are the joint and absolute owners of a residential property i.e. Flat No. "F" in the "IInd" Floor in the apartment known as "Coral Villa Apartments" having an undivided share of 12.795 per cent (equivalent to 690.93 Sq.ft.) of the Plot No: 45 in the sanctioned plan of Ramakrishna Mutt (Brodies) Road Scheme of the Tamil Nadu Housing Board and situate in Thriuveedi Amman Street, Ramakrishna Nagar, Raja Annamalaipuram, Madras 600 028 and Original registered Sale Deed No. 411, Dated: 27/02/1992 duly registered with Sub-Registrar, Mylapore, Madras (Tamil Nadu) has been lost on 21-10-2023 near Kadugodi (Bangalore). My client has also lodged a police complaint bearing Lost Article Report No. 1021574/2024, Dated: 20/04/2024 to the Bangalore City Police. Any person(s) in possession of the aforementioned document may return the same to me or to my client.

S. S. INDIRA
Advocate & Notary Public
No.43/2, Munireddy Building,
Above PARCO Bakers, Near
Kundanahalli Gate Traffic Signal,
Marathahalli, Bangalore - 560037.
Mobile No. +91-99011-10116
Dated: 22nd April, 2024. Place: Bengaluru

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Clients **Sri. Kempanna S/o. Late. Munihanumaiah,** Rist. Adigenahalli Village, Hesaraghatta Hobli, Adigenahalli Post, Yelahanka Taluk, Bangalore Taluk-560064. And Smt. Anusuya @ Anjanamma, D/o. Late. Munihanumaiah, R/at. No.72/1, 2nd Main, 4th Crosss, Kamkeerava Nagar, Nandini Layout, Bangalore North Taluk-560096. party No.1and 2 have filed CR:MISC.NO.139/2024 for death certificate of their grandfather i.e., **Sri. Subbaiah S/o. Late. Kariyappa who was died on 10-08-1990** and date of hearing of the case is **on 30-08-2024 at 11-00 "O" clock morning.** If any dispute regarding the same can appear before the Principal Civil Judge at Devanahalli.

By Order of the Court, Sd/- Chief Ministerial Officer
Civil Judge & JMFC Court, Devanahalli
G.Manjunatha, Advocate

PUBLIC NOTICE
LOST OF DOCUMENTS

My client **SAILAJA NAGA MITTA** w/o Pavan kumar mitta, Residing at Villa # 120, Pembrook Layout, Panathur Main Road, Near Kadubeesanahalli, Outer Ring Road, Bangalore - 560 103 Karnataka, India. my client have Lost Absolute Sale Deed Original Document Identification number BNG(U)-BLR(S)/20628/2005-06.

The schedule property was part of property bearing 96/60, Pannathur Village Varthur Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk acquired by the vendors through family partition dated 10/10/2003 document number: 13429/2003-04 at the office of the Sub-registrar Bangalrore East Taluk.

If any person/s, firm, company, institution or organization has any claim are holding the afore mentioned document, they shall return the same or contact the undersigned in writing within **07 days** from the date of this notice failing which it will be presumed that there are no claims.

Bounded on : East by: Property No 119, West by : Private Property, North by : Road, South by: Property No 102.

In this regard I have lodged the Police Complaint vide Lost Report No. 10222347/2024 dated 20/04/2024 in Varthur Police Station, Bengaluru City.

Lalitha Rohith, Advocate
21/A, 3rd cross, 6th Block,
3rd Phase, Banashankari 3rd Stage,
Bengaluru, Karnataka 560085
M : 8105093871

POSSESSION NOTICE

Whereas, the authorized officer of **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited** (Formerly known as Janalakshmi Financial Services Limited)., under the Securitization And Reconstruction of Financial Assets And Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(2) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 issued **demand notices** to the borrower(s)/ Co-borrower(s) calling upon the borrowers to repay the amount mentioned against the respective names together with interest thereon at the applicable rates as mentioned in the said notices within **60 days** from the date of receipt of the said notices, along with future interest as applicable, incidental expenses, costs, charges etc incurred till the date of payment and/ or realisation.

Sr. No.	Loan No.	Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ Mortgagor	13(2) Notice Date/ Outstanding Due (in Rs.) as on	Date/ Time & Type of Possession
1	32998950000741	1) Mr. Rupesh S, Prop. S V S Ganesh Foods, Also at: M/s. S V S Ganesh Foods, 2) Mr. Rathna T, 3) Mr. Shivanna	13-02-2024 Rs.17,55,650.28 (Rupees Seventeen Lakh Fifty Five Thousand Six Hundred Fifty and Twenty Eight Paisa Only) due as on 12-02-2024	Date: 19-04-2024 Time: 05:09 P.M. Symbolic Possession

Description of the Property: Schedule-'A': All that piece and parcel of the Western side of the property bearing No.36, Khata No.128, Carved in land bearing Sy.No.02, by Government of Karnataka under the GO No. D.P.C. 15, DRH dated 13/05/1972, situated at Madavara Village, Dasanapura Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, measuring East to West 15 feet and North to South 40 feet along with the constructed building and **Bounded on the: East by:** Remaining portion of the same site No.36, **West by:** Site No.35, **North by:** Site No.27, **South by:** Road.

Whereas, the Borrower's/ Co-borrowers'/ Guarantor's/ Mortgagors, mentioned herein above have failed to repay the amounts due, notice is hereby given to the Borrower's mentioned herein above in particular and to the Public in general that the authorized officer of **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited** has **taken symbolic possession** of the properties/ secured assets described herein above in exercise of powers conferred on him under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the dates mentioned above. The Borrower's/ Co-borrower's/ Guarantor's/ Mortgagors, mentioned herein above in particular and the Public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the aforesaid properties/ Secured Assets and any dealings with the said properties/ Secured Assets will be subject to the charge of **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited.**

Place: Bangalore	**Sd/- Authorised Officer**
Date: 22.04.2024	**For. Jana Small Finance Bank Limited**

JANA SMALL FINANCE BANK
(A scheduled commercial bank)

Registered Office: The Fairway, Ground & First Floor, Survey No.10/1, 11/2 & 12/2B, Off Domlur, Koramangla Inner Ring Road, Next to EGL Business Park, Challaghatta, Bangalore-560071.

(FORMAT C - 1)

Declaration about criminal cases

(As per the judgment dated 25th September, 2018, of Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP(Civil) No.536 of 2011(Public Interest Foundation of Ors. Vs. Union of India & Anr.)

Name & Address of Candidate : **Sowmya Reddy, No.455/7, 15th Cross, Lakkasandra, Bengaluru - 560030.**
Name of Political Party : **Indian National Congress Party**
Name of Election : **Parliamentary General Election - 2024**
Name of Constituency : **26 - Bangalore South Parliamentary Constituency (GEN), Karnataka**

I **Sowmya Reddy,** a candidate for the above mentioned election, declare for public information the following details about my criminal antecedents:

A. Pending Criminal Cases			Status of Case(s)	Section of the Acts Concerned & Brief description of offence(s)
Sl NO	Name of Court	Case No & Dated		
1.	37th ACMM Court Bengaluru	Crime No.0070/2023 Accused No. 2 and Status of case as Pending	Pending	Under Section 341, 504, 506, 34 of IPC (Criminal Case)
2.	42nd ACMM (Spl Court to deal with Criminal Cases related to MPs/MLAs trailable by Magistrate in State of Karnataka, Bengaluru	Crime No.339/2023 and Status of case as Pending	Pending	Under Section 504, 323, 353 of IPC (Protest
3.	1st Addl Civil Judge(Jr Dvn) & JMFC Court Kanakapura	CC 145/2022 Accused No.22 and Status of case as Pending	Pending	U/s 141, 143, 290,336R/W149 of Indian Penal Code & 5(3)A of Karnataka Epidemic Diseases Act 2020 (Makedatu Padayatre)
4.	42nd ACMM (Spl Court to deal with Criminal Cases related to MPs /MLAs trailable by Magistrate in State of Karnataka, Bengalur	CC 25317/2022 Accused No.12 and Status of case as Pending	Pending	Under Section 188 IPC and Under Section 103 of Karnataka Police Act 1963 (Protest)
5.	2nd ACMM Court Bengalur	Crime No : 149 / 2022 Accused No.21 and Status of case as Pending	Pending	Under Section 103 Karnataka Police Act 1963 and U/s 3 of Prevention of Damage to Public Property 1984 and Under Section 427, 143, 147, 149, 188, 290 of IPC (PSI Scam Protest)
6.	44th ACMM Court Bengaluru	Crime No : 135/2018 Accused No : 1 and Status of case as Pending	Pending	Under Section 127A of Representation of People Act 1951 and 1988 and Under Section 3 of Karnataka Open Place disfigurement Act 1951 and 1981 (MCC–Case)

(B) Details about cases of conviction for criminal offences

Sl.No	Name of the Court & Dates(s) of order(s)	Description of Offence(s) & Punishment imposed	Maximum Punishment imposed
NA	NA	NA	NA

Date : 16-04-2024
Place : Bengaluru

(Sowmya Reddy)

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₹5,200 CR Foreign Portfolio Investors have made a net outflow in Indian equities so far.

Empowering borrowers: RBI asks lenders to disclose loan details

The Key Fact Statement rules, which will help borrowers make smart choices with their money, will apply to all types of loans for individuals, small businesses

BENN KOCHUVEEDAN @Mumbai

THE Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recently mandated all lenders, including fintechs, to disclose all retail and small business loan details in simple format and lucid language effective October 1 2024, by notifying the key fact statement (KFS) issued on April 15.

The KFS guidelines are an important step towards protecting both retail as well as small business borrowers, and it mandates lenders to provide comprehensive loan agreement details in clear and transparent language and details of all the charges on the borrower including those charged by the lender on behalf of third-party service providers apart from details of recovery agents. The KFS also has to provide contact details for grievance resolution, and the possibility of the loan being transferred to other organisations.

Empowering borrowers

The monetary authority feels KFS will empower borrowers to make smart choices with their money as the new rules will apply to all types of loans for individuals and small businesses, irrespective of the type of lenders.

The new norms are applicable to all commercial banks, housing finance companies, non-bank lenders, cooperative banks and fintechs who are more into co-lending practices, which has the biggest grey areas. They are also applicable to small finance banks, local area banks, regional rural banks, urban co-operative banks, and state & central co-operative banks. The only excluded entities are payments banks and credit card receivables.

The immediate trigger for the KFS notification is the latest Ombudsman report (released on March 11, 2024) which has found many hanky-panky deals by loan apps and also by co-lending entities where most of the loan pricing details are missing.

Full disclosure of loan charges

The biggest transparency tool in the KFS is the annual percentage rate (APR), which is the annual cost of the loan on the borrower, including all other charges. The APR also mandates disclosure of all charges recovered from the borrower by the lender on behalf of third-party service providers such as insurance and legal charges, disclosed separately.

In all cases wherever the lender is involved in recovering such charges, the receipts and related documents shall be provided to the borrower for each payment, within a reasonable time. Any fees, charges, etc. which are not mentioned in the KFS, cannot be charged by the lender to the borrower at any stage during the term of the loan, without explicit consent of the borrower. The other benefits of the APR include borrowers and even aggregators being able to compare the all-in cost of loan from various lenders.

In fact, the APR was notified in January 2015 in the circular on 'display of information by banks' and in September 2022 on the 'guidelines on digital lending'. But most lenders did not go ahead as there was no RBI deadline.

The RBI has been driving loan pricing transparency as it has found that retail borrowers have been subsidising large borrowers who were getting loans at much lower rates than the former as they have better bargaining power. The RBI found this to be against customer interest.

And with the repo-linked lending rate, no bank can lend below the publicly disclosed lending rate which is a 2-3% above the repo rate to any small or big borrower.

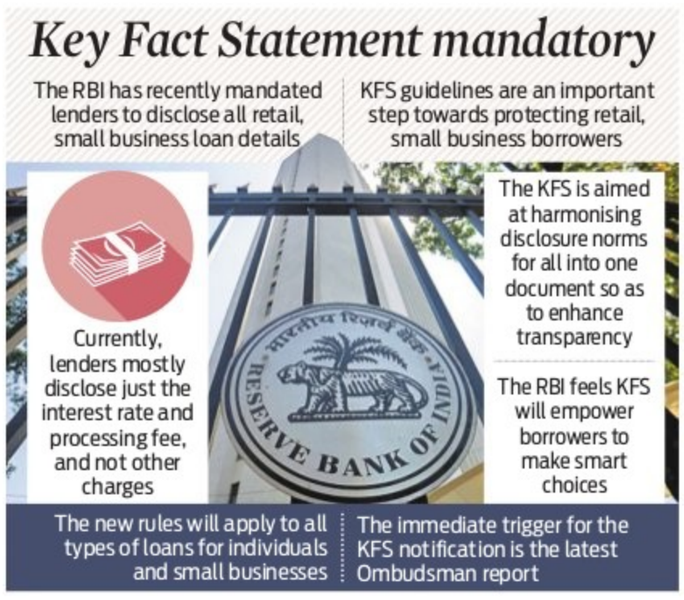
Currently, lenders mostly disclose just the interest rate and processing fee, and not other charges which could be legal charges and property verification fees among others in case of a home loan. In case of personal loans, which are disbursed without much verification checks, normally only the EMI is disclosed and other costs such as processing fee and others are normally hidden. But all these would be a thing of the past from October.

More disclosures

Another key fact is the equated periodic instalment (EPI/EMI), which is an equated or fixed amount of repayments, consisting of both the principal and interest components, to be paid by the borrower towards repayment of a loan at periodic intervals for a fixed number of such intervals; and which result in complete amortisation of the loan.

The March 11 Ombudsman report, in its 'root cause analysis' of major areas of customer complaints, has found the following as the main complaints: a) unauthorised/ fraudulent digital transactions due to lack of robust fraud prevention mechanisms in lenders and customers divulging sensitive information; b) inordinate delays in reversal of failed transactions due to lack of daily reconciliation by lenders; c) poor communication from lenders especially digital lenders on loan terms and conditions like applicable interest rate, foreclosure and other charges; d) levying charges on non-maintenance of minimum balance in deposit accounts due to gap in banks' policy; e) cross selling/ mis-selling due to information asymmetry between customers and lenders; f) inordinate delays in reporting updated credit information to credit information bureaux resulting in wrong credit reports; and g) lender's failure to sensitize its recovery agents regarding extant regulatory guidelines on recovery operations.

The KFS is aimed at harmonising disclosure norms for all into one document so as to enhance transparency and reduce information asymmetry on financial products being offered by different regulated entities, thereby empowering borrowers to make an informed financial decision. Financial literacy still remains much to be desired but financial needs are rapidly rising.



BSE Sensex @ 75,000, What Next?

PANKAJ CHOPRA

BROWSING through the newspapers, one sees quite a few articles and editorials talking about the BSE Sensex having touched 75,000. Frankly, I found that a bit surprising.

This reminded me of a client meeting in the Middle East some years back, when the Sensex was at about 35K. As it was reaching all-time highs then, during the discussion, I mentioned that given time, the Sensex will go to 50K. The client's broad smile expressed his total disbelief in what he thought was an irresponsible statement. However, he remembered the discussion and called me when the Sensex actually reached 50K. An index is just a representative of the markets to give you an idea whether stocks are going up or down and by how much. Various indices that track different segments of the markets and/or differing coverage (30, 50, 100, 200 etc. stocks) perform differently based on the universe they represent.

So the Sensex reaching a certain milestone is good. But what really matters is understanding that the underlying stocks that form the Sensex are going up and even more important is to decipher whether the stocks are going up because of speculative activity, money flow or due to some encouraging signals on fundamental performance. Let us look at money flow and fundamentals separately in an effort to determine the amount of speculative activity, if any. From what we read, mutual funds have been leading from the front, a once-in-a-lifetime change in risk appetite of retail investors in India. With other asset classes having disappointed over the past few years now, retail investors are left with little choice but to start nibbling at equities. A small change on an individual level has in aggregate become ₹ 20,000 crore per month investment into equities through Systematic Investment Plans.

Foreign investors, who have typically been driving the markets till now, have been undecided on what to do next. We believe that is primarily due to their approach driven by top down asset allocation to various regions/markets rather than a bottom up focus on individual markets. Our sense is that this may change soon, probably after the upcoming Union Elections. So, money flow has been strong into the markets and the expectation is that it may become stronger in the future. Fundamentals, the other building block to stock prices also remain at a strong footing. There have been several positive factors that have come together in what Charlie Munger used to call 'The Lollapalooza Effect'. We discuss a few below.

On a very basic level, the country is seeing diminishing uncertainty whether it is a matter of peace and harmony. People are getting more time to focus on their lives and be more productive. This sense of confidence is also one of the pivotal factors that is driving unprecedented consumer demand in the country. With increasing wealth and higher confidence about the future, Indians are going out and spending on discretionary products and services as never before. Combined with this is focused spending by the government in key areas and startups is leading to percolating of money through various strata of the population including and particularly the marginal wage earners. While the top end is spending by uptrending to premium products, the lower end is spending on their basic requirements as their incomes rise. Another key positive is the government's determination to get India into the global supply chains.

Other factors that may influence the trajectory of economic growth going forward include the uncertainty around monsoons. A good monsoon may result in revival of rural demand adding further to the positive landscape. The weak recovery seen in several developed economies and rising geo-political tensions do not bode well for the world as a whole and India within it. India remains a bright spot in an otherwise bleak environment but we hope that the global recovery picks up wind and propels everyone together.

Thus, the indices reaching new highs is neither unexpected nor a negative sign. If the underlying economy is growing and companies are performing robustly, the indices are just an indicator of the same and will keep reflecting the positivity. Investors would do well to devise a well thought out investment plan including long term strategic allocation to various asset classes. They should have the discipline to adhere to the plan rather than get swayed by short term movements and milestones. We are reminded of a saying by Warren Buffet "Games are won by players who focus on the playing field – not those whose eyes are glued to the scoreboard". Here's to the Sensex at 'One Lakh' and beyond.

(The author is the Founder and CEO of Five Rivers Portfolio Managers and can be reached at pankaj@5riversindia.com)

MONEY-WISE

DO YOU WANT TO BE A DO-IT- YOURSELF INVESTOR?

FINANCIAL ADVICE

PV SUBRAMANYAM
writes at www.subramoney.com and has authored the best seller 'Retire Rich - Invest ₹40 a day'

I see people who cannot count beyond 3 want to be a DIY investor. Literally these people should not be investing without help, but then it is their problem, not mine. No. This is not a self-help group.

There are websites and blogs which keep asking you "If your broker is so smart how come he is not rich". To me the question is "if your blogger is really smart and he wants to make money, why is he not rich enough not to blog". Amusing but true. I saw an ad where a housewife tells her cousin that she earned $1200 with 2 weeks of foreign exchange trading. Of course for earning that she had to spend ₹ 240,000 to attend a 2 week course! How gullible. The internet took the Peter Lynch principle, and made it seem irresistible! We have made investing look very simple – especially equity investing. So there he was being manipulated by the blogs to listen to and understand Peter Lynch: using the Internet to learn about buying shares over the Internet. It worked — and "I did it all myself!"

Never before had the Peter Lynch Principle seemed so easy, seductive — and successful. The longish bull-run makes the Dunning-Kruger effect real! He had bought Infosys, HDFC bank, Asian Paints, Biocon, Reliance, and of course a bunch of low grade shares – and his total returns over 3 years was zero! He had also invested in a bunch of mutual fund schemes. Then he joins a group – let us call it "Investing is Easy". This page acts as a 'dare' page. Each guy or girl comes and says "I did this and it worked for me". Remember we are all doctors who can prescribe without even doing an investigation!! Psychologist Marvin Zuckerman has written about a form of risk called "sensation seeking" behaviour. This kind of risk — people daring each other to push past the boundaries of normally acceptable behaviour — is largely a group phenomenon.

People will do things in a social group that they would never dream of doing in isolation. Or at least they claim to do it! So we believe all that we read in a blog – "I bought Infosys and made money" or "I did a SIP in ....and earned so much". The biggest bulls shout the loudest, innumeracy is all prevalent, and we believe that all that we read in a blog (or vlog) or a web page are true. So we peacefully ignore our own track record, tax situation, and start believing all the shit we read. I met one investor who was doing a SIP in a fund which was to be taxed differently. I have met one investor who shifted from Regular to 'direct'. Yes, she saved fees, but the capital gains hurt her real bank balance...

Some bloggers think and tell you "I can do it, so can you". I have to read, assimilate, understand, experiment and then accept it full time. No, not easy, but commonly done.

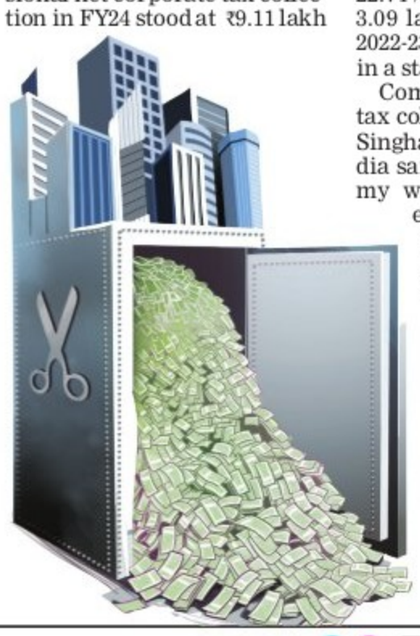
India's direct tax collections jump 18% to ₹19.58 lakh crore in FY24

MONIKA YADAV @ New Delhi

INDIA'S net direct tax collections rose by 17.7% to reach ₹ 19.58 lakh crore in FY24 on account of significant growth in personal income tax. The collections slightly exceeded the revised estimates of ₹19.45 lakh crore by 0.7%, as per the government data. The original direct tax collection target was ₹18.23 lakh crore, which was later revised to ₹19.45 lakh crore. Presently, collections have surpassed both the initial and revised estimates by 7.7% and 0.7% respectively, despite a significant increase in refunds.

The surge in Personal Income Taxes elevated its share to 53.3% from 50.06% previously, while Corporate Taxes' contribution decreased to 46.5% from 49.6%.

Direct taxes consist of personal income tax (including securities transaction tax) and corporate income tax (CIT). An increase in direct taxes signals growth in both personal income and business profitability. The Net Personal Income Tax collection (including securities transaction tax or STT) in FY 24 stood at ₹10.44 lakh crore with a growth of 25.23% year-on-year. Meanwhile, the provisional net corporate tax collection in FY24 stood at ₹9.11 lakh crore, indicating a 10.26% growth compared to the previous year's collection of ₹ 8.26 lakh crore.



"Refunds of ₹3.79 lakh crore have been issued in the FY 2023-24 showing an increase of 22.74% over the refunds of ₹ 3.09 lakh crore issued in FY 2022-23," the government said in a statement.

Commenting on the direct tax collection numbers, Sumit Singhania, Partner, Deloitte India said, "As the Indian economy wades through general election in Q2, continued growth in direct tax collections signifies macro-economic buoyancy which is reassuring from the standpoint of continuity of fiscal discipline, which ought to allow the incoming administration to hit the policy reforms road running, keeping the goal of improving taxpayers services at the core of tax reforms agenda."

Aim 15% market share by FY25: Blue Star MD

ARSHAD KHAN @ New Delhi

MUMBAI-BASED Blue Star is happy that the weather forecast this year is on the hotter side as sudden long spells of monsoon last year severely dented the prospect of the cooling industry last fiscal. The all-important summer season accounts for 40% of annual AC sales.

In a conversation with TNIE, Blue Star Managing Director (MD) B Thiagarajan said that demand for ACs, as well as refrigerators, has hit an inflexion point in India. Thiagarajan says that they are on the go when it comes to capacity expansion to meet the ever-growing demand and increase Blue Star's market share to at least 15% in FY25, an increase of more than 100 bps year-on-year. The MD also spoke about refrigeration business, rural demand and more. Edited Excerpts:

The summer of 2024 is expected to be hot. How has been the initial response?

The weather forecast for the industry has been good and there are lots of things happening such as the economy is doing good, the IPL and the elections. The response in March was excellent. I think industry AC sales will grow by 20% this summer compared to last year's summer and we are targeting a minimum 25% growth. To achieve this, we have aggressively expanded our model portfolio and spent generously on advertising and marketing.

What are your sales and revenue projections for FY25? What sort of market share growth are you eyeing?

Our AC sales would have breached the 1 million unit mark in FY24. This fiscal (FY25), the industry should grow by at least 15% but we want to grow by 20%. Our goal is to increase our market share by 100 basis points every financial year and it is a tough thing. At present, our market share is little less than 14%. We are prepared to achieve 15% market share this year. In revenue terms, going by the quarterly figures we will be around ₹10K crore mark in FY24. We want our revenue to grow by at least 15% CAGR for the next few years. To achieve our objectives, we are ramping up our capacity to 12-13 lakh units per annum this fiscal and scale it to 18 lakh units in due course.

You have a very strong market share in the non-metro markets. What factors drive sales here?

About 65% of our sales come from tier 3-4-5 markets. It used to be 55% four years ago and I think it will peak around 70%. The growth of the AC market is driven by aspirational middle-class buyers. About 92% are first-time buyers with more than 50% buying through consumer finance. The current penetration of AC in Indian households is 8%. By 2030, it should grow to 15%.

How is your refrigeration business doing? Are you planning to increase your capacity here?

Currently, the market size of this industry is between ₹4,500 crore and ₹5,000 crore and by FY28, it is expected to cross ₹ 10,000 crore. The opportunity for growth here is very high. The penetration of refrigerators in Indian households is less than 5% and as the per capita income of households is growing, demand for refrigerators is going to increase, Here, our current capacity, which is 3 lakh units per annum, will meet demand till 2026. After that, we will expand our output.

Ruud defeats Tsitsipas to win Barcelona Open

World No 6 **Casper Ruud** defeated Stefanos Tsitsipas 7-5, 6-3 to win the Barcelona Open on Sunday, the biggest title of his career. The Norwegian earned revenge after his defeat by the Greek World No 7 in the Monte Carlo Masters final last weekend. Ruud had won 10 titles at 250 level with the 500-ranked clay-court event in Barcelona his 11th career triumph.

Candidates chess: Gukesh in pole position after victory over Alireza

AGENCIES @ Toronto

INDIAN Grandmaster D Gukesh shot into sole lead after defeating Firouzja Alireza of France in the 13th and penultimate round of Candidates' Chess tournament here, his quest for the extraordinary placing him on the cusp of becoming the youngest-ever world championship contender.

If the 17-year-old from Chennai emerges victorious at the Candidates, he will take on China's Ding Liren for the world champion's crown.

In the women's event, Humpy Koneru drew with Anna Muzychuk while Vaishali Rameshbabu got the better of Lei Tingjie. The 22-year-old Vaishali has now registered four consecutive wins in her last four games. Needing a win to go ahead after the other overnight leaders, Russian Ian Nepomniachtchi and American Hikaru Nakamura played out a quick draw, Gukesh was awarded for his perseverance as he capitalised on a late blunder by Alireza in a difficult situation.

Gukesh took his tally to 8.5 points out of a possible 13 to emerge a half point ahead of Nepomniachtchi, Nakamura and Fabiano Caruana of the United States.

R Praggnanandhaa and Vidit Gujrathi share the fifth spot on six points apiece with Firouzja on 4.5 and Abasov has 3.5 points. Of the three players in pursuit, Caruana defeated Praggnanandhaa in a hard-fought game while Gujrathi could only get a draw with Nijat Abasov of Azerbaijan.

Gukesh will next meet Nakamura who plays white in the last round game and Caurana will have the advantage of the favourable colour against Nepomniachtchi. While anyone among the four players can win the event, the odds are hugely in favour of Gukesh as the pundits believe that a draw might just be enough to see him emerge as the youngest ever contender for the world championship match.

In the women's section, Zhongyi Tan took a full point lead over nearest rival and compatriot Tingjie Lei following a draw with top seed Russian Aleksandra Goryachkina.

R Vaishali spoiled the party for Lei by scoring a fine victory while Koneru Humpy and Nurgyul Salimova of Bulgaria drew with Anna Muzychuk of Ukraine and Kateryna Lagno of Russia respectively.

Just a draw away from clinching the crown, Lei is in second spot on 7.5 points. Goryachkina, Lagno, Humpy and Vaishali are on 6.5 points, sharing the third spot as Salimova and Muzychuk share the seventh spot with five points apiece.

ROUND 13 RESULTS (INDIANS UNLESS SPECIFIED)

Vidit Gujrathi (5) vs Nijat Abasov (Aze, 3); D Gukesh (7.5) vs Firouza Alireza (Fra, 4.5); R Praggnanandhaa (6) vs Fabiano Caruana (Usa, 7); Ian Nepomniachthi (Fid, 7.5) vs Hikaru Nakamura (Usa, 7.5). Women: Zhongyi Tan (Chn, 8.5) drew with Aleksandra Goryachkina (Fid, 6.5); Koneru Humpy (6.5) drew with Anna Muzychuk (5); R Vaishali (6.5) beat Tingjie Lei (Chn, 7.5); Nurgyuaal Salimova (Bul, 5) drew with Kateryna Lagno (Fid, 6.5). PTI Cor

Keeper-batter sets the tone with a 14-ball 48 as Kolkata Knight Riders beat Royal Challengers Bengaluru by 1 run

A PLAYER WHO'S WORTH HIS SALT

KALYANI MANGALE @ Chennai

ON December 19, 2023, at the Coca-Cola Arena in Dubai, auctioneer Mallika Sagar gave a fair bit of time and chances for all ten franchises to pick the first name of the capped wicketkeeper list for his base price of ₹1.5 crore. There were no takers. Maybe it was his base price or maybe there was some other reason, he could not find a home.

It was baffling for the young lad because he was not half bad for the side represented in the previous season of IPL and his form with the white ball for the national team was nothing short of astonishing. But that's how the dice rolls in cricket. Touring with his national team, that too in the Caribbeans, while the auction going on thousands of miles away was probably the best way to distract his mind. And that is what he did. He smashed 119 off just 57 balls, his second consecutive T20I ton, against the likes of Jason Holder and Andre Russell. His name? Philip Dean Salt.

However, the IPL had different plans for the 27-year-old. When his fellow Englishman, Jason Roy, slated to represent Kolkata Knight Riders, withdrew from the tournament for personal reasons, Salt got his chance. Given his experience with gloves and sheer numbers in the T20s with the bat, he even started in the playing XI for Kolkata right from the get-go. In the first match at his new home ground, Salt peppered the South African pacer Marco Jansen for three back-to-back sixes to announce his arrival. He went on to score a half-century in the game against Sunrisers Hyderabad.

Teams	P	W	L	Pts	NRR
RR	7	6	1	12	0.677
KKR	7	5	2	10	1.206
SRH	7	5	2	10	0.914
CSK	7	4	3	8	0.529
LSG	7	4	3	8	0.123
GT	8	4	4	8	-1.055
MI	7	3	4	6	-0.13
DC	8	3	5	6	-0.47
PBKS	8	2	6	4	-0.29
RCB	8	1	7	2	-1.046

In this season, the unconventional opening pair of Salt and Sunil Narine have been asked to just go out there and make most of the powerplay. So far, they have nailed their role in the competition for the team. They are the top two run scorers for Kolkata with Narine. Among openers, only Sunrisers duo of Travis Head and Abhishek Sharma have scored more runs per over in the IPL so far (13.07 runs/over) than the Kolkata pair (11.91 runs/over). While Narine has been doing this job for the franchise for years, Salt has taken to this new team like a fish to water. That continued when Kolkata hosted Bengaluru at the Eden Gardens. It started with a six off Mohammed Siraj's first over, followed by a stunning pull shot the very next ball. Even when Narine struggled against the likes of Siraj and Yash Dayal, there was no stopping Salt. Dayal started exceptionally well against Narine but Salt treated him for a cracking four through the covers. Lockie Ferguson faced the brunt of Salt's batting with the right-hander smoking the New Zealander for 28 runs. The start Bengaluru got against Narine, was single-handedly neutralised by Salt. Siraj did send him back on 48 in the next over but by then, the damage was already done as KKR posted 222/6. Even when his batting was done for the day, Salt became a blessing for Kolkata when his sharp wicketkeeping secured a one-rune win against RCB. Ferguson, unfortunately, was again at the receiving end as the wicketkeeper broke the stumps to give Kolkata the narrowest win.

Phil Salt was not in Kolkata's plans on the auction day. He came into the squad just two weeks before he faced the first ball of the competition for his franchise. However, over the seven fixtures so far, Salt has been nothing less than a blessing in disguise for Shreyas Iyer's side. The Roy withdrawal had already given them lemons and with the addition of this Salt, looks like they have made a perfect lemonade so far.

Brief scores: KKR: 222/6 in 20 ovs (Shreyas 50, Salt 48) **bt** RCB 221 all out in 20 ovs (Jacks 55, Patidar 52).

KKR's Phil Salt pulled off a run out in an acrobatic manner against RCB at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata on Sunday | SPORTZPICS

MUMBAI SEEK MOMENTUM

Trying to climb up the points table, Mumbai Indians take on toppers Rajasthan Royals on Monday. A look...

Bumrah vs Buttler

There is Jasprit Bumrah, who has been well above the rest of the pacers in the ongoing IPL. He will be going up against Jos Buttler, who seems to have found his mojo with already two centuries this year. The battle between the two will be an exciting contest.

Eyes on Hardik

While the wins have started coming, the pressure on Hardik Pandya does not seem to be going away. Whether it is his form with the bat or the ball, Pandya seems to have struggled to be on top. How long before he goes into a slump?

Rajasthan Royals vs Mumbai Indians, Jaipur

Live on Star Sports and Jio Cinema, 7.30 PM

ROWING

Balraj earns Oly quota for India

FIROZ MIRZA @ Chennai

WITH their best bet in single sculls, Satnam Singh, opting for double sculls ahead of the Asian Games last year, the Rowing Federation of India (RFI), at one stage, deliberated not to send an entry in that category. Fortunately, the RFI president Rajlaxmi Singh Deo then decided to test freshers Balraj Panwar and Kulwinder Singh, both hailing from the Services Sports Control Board (SSCB). Balraj edged past Kulwinder in the best-of-three races to book a place in the national team for the showpiece continental event.

A sepoy with the Indian Army, Balraj narrowly missed bronze at the Asian Games finishing fourth but the experience he gained in Hangzhou paid off on Sunday as the 25-year-old from Karnal, Haryana earned an Olympic quota in single sculls at the Qualification Championships at Chungju, South Korea. He clocked 7:01.27 minutes to finish third in the 2000m race and seal the quota.

In the men's single sculls, the top five make the Olympic cut. Balraj is expected to be India's lone entry in rowing in Paris as Ujjwal Kumar and Arvind Singh finished third in the men's lightweight double sculls. Unlike single sculls, the top two earn the quota in the double sculls. World Qualifier will be the last qualifying event in rowing but chances of Indian rowers winning quota there is highly unlikely.

Balraj Panwar took up the sport just four years ago

"I am glad that I booked a ticket for the Paris Games," Balraj told this daily. Interestingly, Balraj started rowing only four years ago. He always wanted to serve in the Indian Army and given his tall frame (6 feet), Sunil Kumar, coach at Bengal Engineering Group, Roorkee, asked Balraj to take up rowing in 2020. Soon after being initiated into the sport, he did well in the inter-battalion and inter-centre competitions to get entry into the Army Rowing Node in Pune in October 2021.

Hailing from a modest background, Balraj lost his father Randhir Singh when he was 11. His mother, Kamla Devi, worked in garment factories to earn livelihood for the family comprising six children (four daughters and two sons). Once Balraj got recruited into the Indian Army, he started taking care of the family's expenses. "She (mother) is over the moon with my qualification for Olympics. She worked in factories to make sure we did not sleep hungry. I hope to perform to the best of my potential in the Olympics to make her the proudest mother in the world," added Balraj.

The team is expected to return to the country on Tuesday. Balraj says the RFI and the coaches will certainly arrange exposure trips for him ahead of the Games. "Nothing has been decided yet but I am hopeful the federation and coaches will come up with a plan so that I can get the best preparations before the Olympics." Apart from Balraj, para-rowers Narayana Konganapalle and Anita finished first in their qualification race with a timing of 7:50.80 minutes and earned a quota for the Paralympics in mixed double sculls. Meanwhile, Salman Khan and Nitin Deol on Saturday won a gold medal in the men's double sculls event in the Asian Rowing Cup, which was held simultaneously with the Asian Qualifiers.

Sai Kishore shines as Titans seal emphatic victory over Kings

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Chennai

R SAI KISHORE took a four-wicket haul (4/33) as Gujarat Titans dismissed Punjab Kings for 142 in Mullanpur on Sunday. In reply, Titans chased down the target in the final over with three wickets in hand.

Opting to bat first, Kings were off to a flying start with Prabhsimran Singh hitting three fours and a six off Sandeep Warrier. Azmatullah Omarzai, too, was not spared as he was hit for a four and a six by Sam Curran and Prabhsimran, respectively. Mohit Sharma bowled a quiet over, but soon Shubman Gill had to turn to Rashid Khan. Another boundary-less over meant Prabhsimran went after Mohit in the next over and upper cut the seamer into the stands. However, he got out the very next ball trying to hit over cover as Kings finished powerplay with 56/1. Noor Ahmad removed Rilee Russow shortly after the powerplay and Rashid sent back Curran, putting Kings in a spot of bother. Two more boundary-less overs continued as Kings scrapped their way to 74/3 at the halfway mark. Just when it looked like Liam Livingstone and Jitesh Sharma are getting their eye in, Noor deceived the former with a googly. R Sai Kishore cleaned up Sharma as the hosts lost half their side with 86 runs on board.

R Sai Kishore took 4/33 against Punjab Kings on Sunday | SPORTZPICS

Once again, it was down to Ashutosh Sharma and Shashank Singh — the two uncapped batters who have been consistent for the Kings. Can they do it one more time? The question lingered on as Shashank and Ashutosh kept the scoreboard moving with singles. Getting a chance to play after a while, Sai Kishore spoiled the duo's party by dismissing Ashutosh first and then followed it up with the wicket of Shashank. With Kings down to 99/7, it seemed like they might not even cross 120. However, Harpreet Brar came up with the cameo — 29 runs from 12 balls — as Kings finished the innings with 142 on board. **Brief scores:** Punjab Kings 142 in 20 overs (Prabhsimran 35; Noor 2/20, Rashid 1/15, Sai Kishore 4/33) lost to Gujarat Titans 146/7 in 19.1 ovs (Gill 35, Tewatia 36 n.o).

OLY QUALIFIERS

Greco-Roman wrestlers put up tame show

ENS @ Chennai

DISAPPOINTING show of the Indian men wrestlers continued at the Asian Olympic Games Qualifier in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan as none of the Greco-Roman grapplers managed to secure a berth for the Paris Games on Sunday. Only Sunil Kumar (87kg) managed to win a bout in the qualifier while other five got eliminated losing to their opponents in the first-round.

Earlier on Friday, four freestyle wrestlers failed to reach the finals of their respective weight categories, thus going out of contention. Deepak Punia (86kg) and Sujeet Kalkal (65kg) missed the weigh-in and subsequently the competition to add to India's woes. "They (GR wrestlers) are the ones who have undertaken most of the exposure trips in the last one year but the same was not reflected in their performances. Losing in the first round is unacceptable," a source in the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI), told this daily.

F1: Dominant Verstappen wins again to extend lead

AGENCIES @ Shanghai

MAX VERSTAPPEN rounded off a dominant weekend with victory in the first Chinese Grand Prix for five years on Sunday to extend his world championship lead, a day after romping to sprint victory.

The three-time world champion was again in a league of his own as Formula One returned to the Shanghai International Circuit for the first time since 2019. He finished 13.7 seconds ahead of Lando Norris with Red Bull teammate Sergio Perez third, a further six seconds back. It looked odds-on that Red Bull would repeat their one-two in Japan a fortnight ago until two safety cars in quick succession mid-race.

Results (top-five): 1. Max Verstappen (NED/Red Bull) 56 laps in 1hr 40min 52.554sec, 2. Lando Norris (GBR/McLaren) +13.773; 3. Sergio Perez (MEX/Red Bull) + 19.160; 4. Charles Leclerc (MON/Ferrari) + 23.623; 5. Carlos Sainz (ESP/Ferrari) + 33.983.

OST 2: Top marks for Manu & Anish

ENS @ New Delhi/Chennai

MANU Bhaker was once again on top of her game on Sunday. After a high score, which was well above the world record mark, 24 hours earlier, Manu returned to post an aggregate score of 585 in the women's 25m pistol qualification in the second Olympic Shooting Trials in New Delhi. The quota winner now heads into the finals, scheduled to be held on Monday, in pole position. Esha Singh, who topped the T1 qualifications, was second with a tally of 581. Rhythm Sangwan finished a disappointing fifth with 566 points. Anish Bhanwala also solidified his position with a score of 582 to clinch the top spot in the men's 25m rapid fire pistol qualification. Fellow quota winner Vijayveer Sidhu finished a point behind him.

Subdued start

In the last Olympic qualifier in Doha which started on Sunday, Neeru was the best-placed Indian at 25th spot after two rounds in the qualification stage of the women's trap event. Manisha Keer and Shreyasi were placed 53rd and 54th, respectively. In the men's trap, Zoravar Singh Sandhu was placed 60th after two rounds in the qualification stage. Prithviraj Tondaiman and Vivaan Kapoor were placed 89th and 118th, respectively. It goes without saying the trap shooters will have to improve massively to have any chance of qualification in the remaining three rounds.

EXPRESS READ

Indian duo makes Oly cut in mixed team relay

ANTALYA: India's mixed relay team comprising Akshdeep Singh and Priyanka Goswami qualified for Paris Olympics by virtue of their 18th place finish at the World Athletics Race Walking Team Championships here. The duo clocked a personal best time of 3:05.03 across the 42.195 km distance that they covered.

HI probable group for natl camp ahead of Oly

NEW DELHI: Hockey India on Sunday announced a 28-member core probable group for the men's national camp to iron out the flaws ahead of the Paris Olympics. The camp began on Sunday and will last till May 13 in Bengaluru. The team returns to camp after suffering a 0-5 loss in a five-match Test series in Australia.

Squash meet: Tandon shocks World No 11

NEW DELHI: India's Ramit Tandon notched up a stunning 3-1 win over French world No 11 Victor Crouin in the second round of the El Gouna International Open, a $198,000 prize money PSA Platinum squash event, in El Gouna, Egypt. The World No 40 Tandon won 11-9, 12-10, 8-11, 11-5 in 52 minutes.

Liverpool overcome Fulham to stay in PL title hunt

AGENCIES @ London

LIVERPOOL beat Fulham 3-1 on Sunday to stay in hunt for the Premier League title.

Earlier, Arsenal had beaten Wolves 2-0 to go top of the table. After that result, Liverpool were under pressure to get three points against Fulham. After a tricky first half, where the game was tied 1-1, Liverpool added two more goals in the second to claim maximum points.

Trent Alexander-Arnold, Ryan Gravenberch and Diogo Jota were the goalscorers for the Reds, who are currently behind leaders Arsenal on goal difference after 33 games. an City, who were engaged in FA Cup tie on Saturday, are just a point behind the two teams but they have a game in hand.

Liverpool's Diogo Jota (c) celebrates after scoring his side's third goal | AP

Massive win for Aston Villa

Aston Villa tightened their grip on Champions League football next season with a 3-1 win over Bournemouth. **Results:** Fulham 1-3 Liverpool; Crystal Palace 5-2 West Ham; Aston Villa 3-1 Bournemouth; Everton 2-0 Nottm Forest; Wolves 0-2 Arsenal.

Man United reach final

Manchester United overcame an astonishing collapse to beat Coventry on penalties in an FA Cup classic on Sunday, setting up a second straight FA Cup final against Manchester City. Erik ten Hag's men won the shootout at Wembley 4-2, with Rasmus Hojlund scoring the decisive spot kick after the teams were level at 3-3 after extra-time.

Air Marshal Krishnaswamy Anantharaman PVSM, VSM (Retd) speaks to **Karthikeya S** about serving India via a career in the Indian Air Force

SOARING HEIGHTS OF EXCELLENCE AT THE...

INDIAN AIR FORCE

> **A small percentage of Air Force aspirants become pilots. The rest can be Flight Navigators, and if they studied in IITs or NITs, they can join the technical branch**
>
> Air Marshal Krishnaswamy Anantharaman

AIR MARSHAL K ANANTHARAMAN, PVSM, VSM

LIKE the Army and Navy, a career in the Indian Air Force is highly respected and coveted. As a result, it remains a popular career option for defence aspirants – with over 7.5 lakh applications to the Indian Air Force in 2022, through the Agnipath scheme.

The Air Force also presents an opportunity for a life of adventure and dynamism, a statement Air Marshal Krishnaswamy Anantharaman PSVM, VSM (Retd) fully agrees with.

With over 38 years of service, Krishnaswamy Anantharaman has had a long and illustrious career in the Indian Air Force. In his career, he was also awarded the Param Vishisht Seva Medal (PVSM), and Vishisht Seva Medal (VSM) for exceptional service. He is currently serving as the Head and Vice-President of GMR Aero Academy.

Speaking to *EdexLive*, the retired Air Marshal detailed his life and time at the Indian Air Force, the values and lessons the Air Force taught him, and his advice to young aspirants. Excerpts from an insightful conversation:

You have had a long and illustrious career from 1985 to 2023. What hats did you wear in the Air Force?

I started my career in the Indian Air Force as a Pilot Officer and was posted in the district of Tinsunia in Assam for three years. I took on the responsibilities of HR and legal management, liaisoning with civil agencies, as well as the planning and implementation of operational infrastructure developments of the station.

I was appointed as a Provost Marshall twice. Among the many roles that I essayed are Chief Administration Officer of an Air Force Base in Bengaluru, senior leadership positions in the Western Air Command in New Delhi, and in my last role, I reported directly to the Chief of Air Staff, and executed infrastructure development projects for the Indian Air Force worth ₹4,000 crore per annum until I superannuated on May 31, 2023.

What skills and qualities do Air Force officers acquire throughout their careers?

Right from the training period, officers are taught to lead by example and lead from the front. The first thing we teach at the training academy is to have integrity at every step.

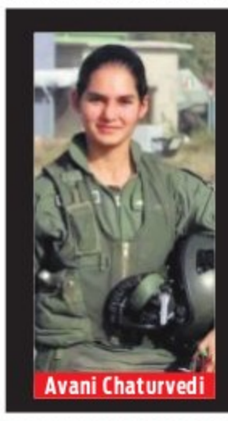
Next, we teach that the mission takes precedence over everything and that we have to place service before self. Then, we teach trainees that there must be excellence in every task they do.

I always told my officers and men that no matter where they were posted, or what position they were appointed in, it wouldn't take two months for their subordinates to judge them. As a result, they must make sure to have the right competence, conduct themselves well, have the right professional behaviour, have the financial credence to manage funds and take care of the officers in their command.

Any advise for aspirants?

The Armed Forces, and the Air Force in particular, acts as a stepping stone towards competency and personality development. Many countries in the world have mandatory short-term service, and make sure that officers step out of service with better bets. We are attempting to do that, through the Agnipath programme.

Through serving in the Air Force, your character gets built and you can contribute better in civilian arenas.


Avani Chaturvedi

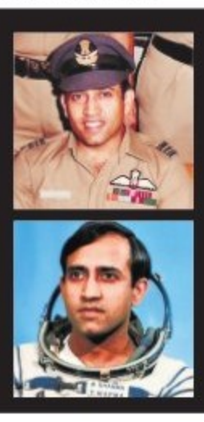
Mohana Singh

Bhawana Kanth

In June 2016, the Indian Air Force welcomed its first three female fighter pilots. All three have been awarded the prestigious Nari Shakti Puraskar by the President of India

Did you know?

Commissioned as a Pilot Officer in the Indian Air Force in 1970, Wing Commander *Rakesh Sharma's* historic journey in 1984 marked him as the first Indian in space. He spent eight days aboard the Salyut 7 space station. His achievements earned him the 'Hero of Soviet Union' title and the Ashoka Chakra, India's highest peacetime gallantry award



Training path: The journey of an Indian Air Force officer

How is it like

DAY 1 IN AFA

- Upon arrival at Secunderabad Railway Station, cadets are greeted by the banner titled 'Reporting for Air Force Academy' and guided by personnel stationed there. Their names are checked off, and they are assigned to one of the four squadrons at the Air Force Academy (AFA): Aquino (Blue), Brar (Red), Qatre (Green), and Chitnis (Yellow), named after the first four commandants of the AFA.
- Next, cadets are escorted to the Flights Cadet Mess (FCM) at the AFA, where they undergo thorough checks to ensure compliance with academy regulations. Mobile phones, cameras, and any personal food items are surrendered, and cadets are encouraged to write letters to their families and friends for communication during their training period.

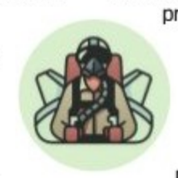
DAY 2 TO FULL FIRST WEEK

The initial days are dedicated to completing various formalities, including kit issuance, tailor fittings, mandatory haircuts, and medical examinations.

2nd WEEK ONWARD

STAGE 0: Pre-Flight Training (Only for non-NDA Entries): For non-NDA cadets, this stage spans six months and focuses on imparting basic military training, bridging the gap from civilian life to military discipline.

STAGE 1: Over the course of six months, cadets commence their flight training, starting with the Pilatus PC-7 basic trainer aircraft. Alongside practical flying sessions, they study ground subjects and acquire fundamental flying skills.



STAGE 2: Lasting another six months, this stage sees cadets transition to flying different aircraft based on their designated streams, such as fighters, transports, or helicopters. For fighter pilots, training progresses to the Kiran HJT-16 aircraft, providing exposure to more complex flying manoeuvres and systems.

STAGE 3: The final stage involves flying the BAE Hawk Aircraft, a high-performance jet capable of carrying weapons. Upon completion, cadets are commissioned and posted to frontline fighter squadrons, where they operate aircraft within the squadron's inventory.

BREAKS: After mid-terms for a couple of days and again after final term for a month. Every term is for six months.

HOBBY HOUR: To foster physical fitness and personal growth, cadets engage in hobby hour activities such as football, volleyball, basketball, swimming, archery, shooting and other sports, promoting a well-rounded approach to their training.

WINGS OF HONOUR

A CAREER IN THE INDIAN AIR FORCE: HOW CAN YOU CHART YOUR COURSE?

THE Air Force has consistently played a pivotal role in the conflicts and wars that the country has been involved in. Whether it was the skies of the Bangladesh War or the peaks of the Kargil War, the Air Force has always been at the forefront, securing crucial victories. Moreover, joining the Air Force offers a rewarding career path, with various avenues available for aspirants to pursue their dreams. But what are they?

Ways to get into Air Force

A. FOR INTERMEDIATE 10+2

1 *National Defence Academy (NDA)/Naval Academy (NA)*

- The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) NDA/NA examination is a prestigious gateway for candidates who aspire to join the Air Force straight out of high school.
- NDA cadets typically undergo three years of rigorous training, positioning them for direct entry into the first stage of flying training.

ENTRY SCHEME

Conducted by: UPSC, **Branch:** Flying, Aeronautical Engineering (Electronics), Administration and Logistics

Notification: Released during May and December

Training: 3 years at NDA Khadakwasla, 1 year at any IAF establishment

Duration: 4 years

B. FOR GRADUATES/ENGINEERS

2 *Combined Defence Services Examination (CDSE)*

- Another avenue offered by the UPSC, the CDSE provides an opportunity for graduates to join the Air Force.
- Candidates selected through CDSE undergo a different trajectory compared to NDA cadets, but both paths converge at the initial stages of flying training.

ENTRY SCHEME

Conducted by: UPSC, **Branch:** Flying

Notification: Released during May and December

Training: Air Force Academy, Hyderabad

Duration: 4 years

3 *Air Force Common Admission Test (AFCAT):*

- AFCAT is a specialised examination for graduates to secure entry into the Air Force as officers in various branches, including flying, technical, and ground duty.
- Successful candidates through AFCAT follow a distinct training path, tailored to their chosen specialisation within the Air Force.

ENTRY SCHEME

A. Flying Branch

Conducted by: Disha Cell, Indian Air Force

Notification: Released during June and December

Training: Air Force Academy, Hyderabad

Duration: 1 year

B. Ground Duty (Technical) i.e. Aeronautical Engineering (Mechanical) and Aeronautical Engineering (Electronics) Branch

Conducted by: Disha Cell/ Indian Air Force

Notification: Released during June and December

Training: Air Force Academy, Hyderabad followed by Air Force Technical College, Bengaluru

Duration: 22 weeks + 52 weeks ~ approximately 1.5 years

c. Ground Duty (Non Technical) i.e Weapon Systems, Administration, Accounts, Logistics, Meteorology & Education

Conducted by: Disha Cell/ Indian Air Force

Notification: Released during June and December

Training: Air Force Academy, Hyderabad

Duration: 1 year

4 *National Cadet Corps (NCC) special entry*

- A valid NCC Air Wing "C" certificate is required to get into Air Force through NCC.
- To obtain this certificate, the cadet must have attended at least one Annual Training Camp or National Integration Camp (NIC). Additionally, cadets who possess a Certificate - A are eligible for 10 bonus marks.
- In terms of practical requirements, an air wing cadet must complete a minimum of 10 Glider launches. This typically occurs during the third year of their degree course.
- For NCC Junior Wing, the age limit is 12-18.5 years for both genders, while for the Senior Wing, it's 26 years for both.

ENTRY SCHEME

Conducted by: Disha Cell, Indian Air Force, **Branch:** Officers in the flying branch and ground duty (Technical and Non-Technical) branches

Notification: Released during June and December, **Training:** Air Force Academy, Hyderabad

Duration: Flying and Ground Duty (Technical) is for 62 weeks, Ground Duty (Non-Technical) for 52 weeks

Air Force Technical College (AFTC), Bengaluru

Source: https://indianairforce.nic.in/air-force-technical-college/

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DAY'S DIARY

Use of optical fibre

In 1977, General Telephone and Electronics deployed the world's first live telephone traffic in Long Beach, California

NEXT STEPS

They were soon followed by Bell in May 1977, with an optical telephone communication system installed in the downtown Chicago area, covering a distance of 1.5 miles

PIONEERS

Narinder Singh Kapany and Charles Kuen Kao were the fathers of fibre optics as such and of fibre optic communications, respectively

ADVANCEMENTS

Fiber optic technology has virtually replaced copper wire in long-distance telephone lines. It is used to link computers within local area networks

A curated guide to happenings in the city

PG 2

'IT'S JUST ONWARD AND UPWARD FOR ME'

Actor Priyamani on her 'moment in Bollywood' and working with Ajay Devgn in her latest, *Maidaan*

MONIKA MONALISA

IT is arguably one of the best times for actor **Priyamani**, who is currently enjoying significant success in Bollywood. After Shah Rukh Khan-starrer *Jawan*, which was released in December last year, her first Hindi film of this year, *Article 370*, opened to positive reviews. This month, the actor returned to the big screen once again with her latest film, *Maidaan*, a period drama, which also stars Ajay Devgn. The film is based on Syed Abdul Rahim, a pioneering football coach in India from 1952 to 1962, and Priyamani portrays his wife, Saira. She describes Saira as someone who goes to any extent to realise her husband's dreams. "She is the catalyst in his life but pulls the strings when needed. Her relationship with her husband is very pure and different from what it was during that era," Priyamani adds.

Working with Devgn for the first time, she found him to be a man of few words. "During the shoot, we didn't have an opportunity to sit down to talk and get to know each other a little better. But, we did discuss how the South industries work and spoke about some of the directors from the Southern industry," Priyamani says, adding that it was during the promotions that she saw the lighter side of Devgn. "He's a man of few words, but whatever he says makes so much sense. As an actor, he is simply par excellence," she adds.

Priyamani's current success in Bollywood is evident, and she has been unapologetically embracing it. "I'm fortunate enough that I got to be part of some wonderful projects where I got paired with big names. Also, I believe in the projects I do. That also plays a major factor but I'm very grateful that they thought of me to have me as part of the project and think of me as a particular character that they want me to play," says the National Award-winning actor. She continues, "I am glad that the project that I was working on finally saw the light of day, I mean, they really, were doing extremely well. Now it's just onward and upward for me."

In addition to Bollywood, Priyamani is active in various South Indian film industries. Every film industry is known for having a very distinctive work culture and Priyamani says it does not take her more than a day or two to get used to the new set up. "I try to get to know their vision and for me, it's quite easy to adapt into it and carry on with the project," she notes. Priyamani also mentions she has several projects that she has been listening to. "I'll be able to announce the ones that have received the green light from production soon," she concludes.

> *I'm fortunate enough that I got to be part of some wonderful projects where I got paired with big names. Also, I believe in the projects I do. That also plays a major factor...* – Priyamani, actor

CITY READ

Luxury skin care brand launched in the city

Augusté Skin, a premier skincare brand, recently launched its luxury facial-only studio in Shanthala Nagar. Founders Ayesha Sabha and Siddanth Saraf started Augusté Skin to empower individuals to embrace their natural beauty while nurturing their skin's health and overall well-being. The luxury facial studio offers a curated selection of personalised treatments to address diverse skin needs. From revitalising sessions like the OxyRevive Radiance Facial to specialised treatments like the SonicSkin Exfoliation Facial, clients can indulge in tailor-made experiences guided by skilled aestheticians.

Dance tribute to Carnatic music composer to be held

The Natanam Institute of Dance is hosting a tribute event to Syama Shastri, a revered Carnatic music composer at Yuvaka Sangha, Jayanagar, on April 27, 5pm. The event will feature a performance led by Raksha Karthik, along with her disciples, celebrating Shastri's significant contributions to Indian classical music. The event will also include performances by several artists: Natuvangam by Vidwan Devaraju BV, vocals by Vidwan Balasubramanya Sharma, veena by Vidwan Prashanth, flute by Vidwan Jayaram Kikkeri, and rhythm pads by Vidwan Prasanna Kumar. Rohini Raghunandan will serve as the Master of Ceremonies.

XPRESS FOCUS

BNMIT's ICCIIS-2024 Delivers Insights on Continuous Learning and Industry Trends

Dr. G. N. Krishnamurthy - Principal BNMIT; Dr. S.Y. Kulkarni - Additional Director, BNMIT; Atul Tripathi - Keynote Speaker, Ex AI & Hig Data Consultant National Security Council Secretariat, (PMD, New Delhi); Sumithra Ranganathan - Chief Guest, Senior Vice President, Global Delivery Head @ ERS HCL Tech; Narayana Rao R. Maanay - Chairman, Governing Body, BNMIT; Dr. Sadagopan - IIIT Director; Ashok Maanay - Vice Chairperson, BNMIT; Dr. Gururaj H.L - Guest of Honour, ACM Eminent Speaker & IEEE Senior Member, Manipal Institute of Technology, Bengaluru; Prof. Eishwar N. Maanay - Dean, BNMIT; Prof. T. J. Rama Murthy - Director, BNMIT and others were present

An International Conference on Computing & Intelligent Information Systems (ICCIIS - 2024) was recently organised at BNMIT, Banashankari.

Speaking on the occasion, Sumitra Ranganathan, Senior Vice President of the Global Delivery Division at ERS HCL Tech Company, emphasised the importance of continuous learning for achieving success in life.

"Today, technology is progressing at a rapid pace. Everyone must keep pace with the times. There is a pressing need for students to deepen their understanding of Artificial Intelligence (AI). The medical and online sectors have experienced high demand during the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, there is currently significant demand in the fuel and automobile sectors. Agriculture contributes 18 percent, industry 27 percent, and the service sector 55 percent to our country's GDP," remarked Sumitra Ranganathan. She further noted that the rapidly growing youth demographic is a valuable resource for our nation, emphasising the importance of students actively contributing to the country's progress.

IIIT Director Sadagopan highlighted the significant changes India has witnessed over the past decade. "Women have gained numerous opportunities, achieving top positions such as Speaker and President. Women are leaving their mark across all sectors."

BNMIT Vice Chairperson Ashok R Maanay , BNMIT Dean Ishwar N. Maanay, BNMIT Director Prof. TJ Rama Murthy, Dean Ishwar N. Maanay, Additional Director of the College Dr. S.Y. Kulkarni, Principal of the College, Dr. G. N. Krishnamurthy and others were present.

Seminars are being organised with the aim of fostering interest in the industry among students during their college tenure. These seminars serve as platforms for students to engage directly with industrialists, thereby enabling them to get firsthand insights and wisdom from seasoned professionals.

-Narayana Rao R. Mane, President, BNMIT Charity

CCJ's Business Talk Show Explores 'Problems and Opportunities in New Birth'

(L to R): Dr. Winston Jacob, Stephen Cooke, Christopher King, Braj Kishor Gupta, Venkatesh Rao, Nicole Lee, Darshini Jacob, Deanna Cooke, Daniela Chiere Go, Sally Ann Campbell and others were present

City College, Jayanagar, organised the 'CCJ - A Business Talk Show' titled 'Problems and Opportunities in New Birth' recently.

Speaking on the occasion, English Littérateur Darshini Jacob said, "Students should dare to make mistakes. It is only then that one can learn something new," and added that students should be involved in arts and theater. "This involvement will increase your courage," she said.

Various professionals and businessmen participated in the programme. City College Principal Puttaraju, Programme Coordinator Adam Tito, and others were present. Nicole Lee, Christopher King, Stephen Kok, and others participated in the lecture programme as resource officers.

We organise such programmes with an aim of introducing the students to the industry. We are imparting practical education to our students. In this background, we always invite industrialists to share their experience.

-Monica Kalluri, Vice President, City Group of Institutions

Inspired by Dalit literature of the '80s, this play explores the Dalit movement in Karnataka through written word and songs

A Requiem for Resistance

A still from the play

POOJA DAS

WHENEVER it comes to resisting oppression in any society, theatre, song and poetry become the loudest embodiment of the oppressed. Whether it be Faiz Ahmed Faiz's *Hum Dekhenge* or Amir Aziz's *Sab Yaad Rakha Jayega* – songs have had the power to create bridges and break barriers simultaneously. Using this powerful tool, the Bengaluru-based Jangama Collective is bringing *Panchama Pada*, a theatrical production melding songs of resistance, and heartfelt narratives recorded in the *Panchama* magazine, which aligned with the Dalit movement in Karnataka. "There aren't many plays on Dalit experiences and resistance in Kannada. What was inspiring about *Panchama* was that all the issues that were there were from real incidents. The atrocities on Dalits and the people who were writing in the magazine were first generation Dalit writers documenting their experiences which really inspired me," says director Chandra Sekhara K.

The production draws heavily from the visceral writings published in *Panchama* magazine. "In the '80s, many of the mainstream newspapers were not addressing Dalit issues so this magazine was started to bridge that gap. When we started reading the archives, we felt like many things are still the same. That made us want to create a performance where we can talk about these issues with people," says Lakshmana KP, the designer of the show. Sekhara explains that he did not just want to make a conventional street or stage play. "I wanted to create a play that looks like a protest," shares the director, adding, "I didn't want the performance to look like people were acting. It had to look real and represent the reality with sincerity."

Featuring an all-Dalit cast, the structure of the play is mainly from songs of resistance. "The songs are the major ingredients, constructing the play's narrative. We found songs which could be connected with different narratives in *Panchama*. One of the major resources for us has been Kotiganahalli Ramaiah's *Horatada Hadugalu* (songs of struggle)," adds Sekhara. Lakshmana further adds that while it is disheartening to see that many instances recorded in the magazine are similar to what the community still faces, the play is to create a collective expression of the Dalit movement. "We are engaging with everybody – from the cast and the audience – to bring in their perspectives. It's not just about remembering what happened then in the '80s but also connect it to the actors' experiences." The 90-minute production also has an interactive segment, where audience members are invited to share their own experiences or stories of resistance.

Adding another layer to the narrative, Lakshmana highlights the importance of musical and instrumental fidelity to the Dalit identity. "We are conscious of not using any other instruments than the ones played by the untouchable community like the tamate. We use it prominently in the play and it is like an orchestra of the songs of resistance," he says.

(Panchama Pada will be staged on April 22, 7pm at the Bangalore International Centre, Domlur. For more details, visit bangaloreinternationalcentre.org)

Aslam Gafoor (@aslamgafoor) is a hospitality professional with experience in business development, sales and marketing with well-known hotels, and food and beverage companies. A few of his passions are travel, food and wine, and he enjoys sharing these experiences as a columnist.

GRUB HUB

THE QUIZ WILL BE PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY

Send answers to **bengalurucityexpress@gmail.com** with the subject line **'Food quiz'** The correct answers and names of the first three respondents with right answers will be featured in *CE* on Monday. The first-prize winner will receive a voucher worth ₹1,000 from Plaka by Chef Ajay Chopra, Yelahanka **

THE RIGHT ANSWERS

1) Kokum 2) Langsat 3) Durian

FIRST 3 TO GET IT RIGHT

1) Shriya R 2) Goutham Kumar 3) Trishul M

ON A LANKAN FOOD TRAIL

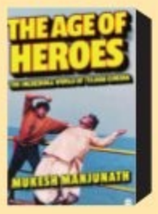
BOOK NOOK

Against Storytelling
By Amit Chaudhuri

The essays in this book, delivered originally as talks at a Literary Activism symposium, look again at the assumptions that underlie the way we think of storytelling and storytellers.

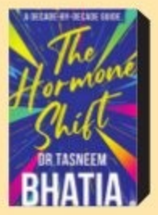
Before I Forget: A Memoir
By MK Raina

Harrowing and joyous, laced with humour and the spirit of coexistence, the book is a searing, heart-wrenching memoir of a Kashmiri forced to leave his home, who goes on to become a cultural figure and one of the greatest theatre actors of modern India.



The Age Of Heroes : The Incredible World of Telugu Cinema
By Mukesh Manjunath

The book looks at the historical-cultural factors that have produced cult heroes like NT Rama Rao, Chiranjeevi and Pawan Kalyan-and Vijayashanti, who embody the concept of the female hero.



The Hormone Shift : A Decade-by-Decade Guide
By Dr Tasneem Bhatia

It breaks down exactly what is happening behind the scenes in a woman's body throughout her life and how almost every aspect of health is connected to hormones-from metabolism to mental health.

JUMPING JOYS

Children play on a Bouncy Castle during Mango Utsava Bangalore 2024 at the National College grounds, Basavanagudi on Sunday | ALLEN EGENUSE J

QUICKFIX

PAZHAM NURUKKU

INGREDIENTS

- **Rice flour :** 1/2cup
- **Coconut mylk :** 2 cups
- **Nendrappazham :** 1
- **Sugar :** 3 tbsp
- **Salt :** 1 pinch
- **Cardamom :** 4
- **Water :** as needed

METHOD

- Add rice flour, banana (diced into small cubes), coconut mylk, sugar, and water and salt to a saucepan and place it on the stove at low flame for 10 minutes. Bring the contents to a boil and turn off the flame once the mixture starts frothing.

Contributed by **Marcella Anthony**, Kochi

ASK AN XPERT

DR VIVEK ARORA
drvivekarora@hotmail.com

The expert is a senior veterinarian, Dr Gandhi's Pet Clinic, Delhi.

We house two stray dogs and are thinking of adopting them. We have a rabbit. How can we ensure the rabbit's safety and bond them?

That's wonderful to know that you soon would be adopting the dogs full-time. It's very sensible that you got both the dogs neutered, however bringing them into a new environment can cause a minor hierarchical change among pets especially when we know that rabbits are generally quiet, nocturnally active and solitary as compared to dogs who are in packs. Keep the rabbit close to you, cuddle him, love him in front of the dogs. Feed them separately, making sure the feed competitiveness doesn't arise. There should be firm commands to dogs deterring them from encroaching on the rabbit's space or food. When the pets are in the same room, the rabbit should be close to you; follow this for many months. This will send a message to dogs indicating how vital the rabbit is in the family. Also, whenever dogs sniff the rabbit, or just sit next to him quietly, do praise them.

FITBIT

VIRABHADRASANA I
(WARRIOR POSE I)

This is a beginner level pose, that is one of the three Warrior Poses. It combines both the standing and balancing action of the body. Students are required to balance movements in different directions. This creates stillness in the mind, building focus, power, and stability, thereby improving health at a holistic level. The purpose of practicing this foundational pose is primarily to increase the flexibility in the hips and strengthen the legs, core, back, ankles and feet. Interestingly, it acts as a great preparatory pose for other poses.

STEPS

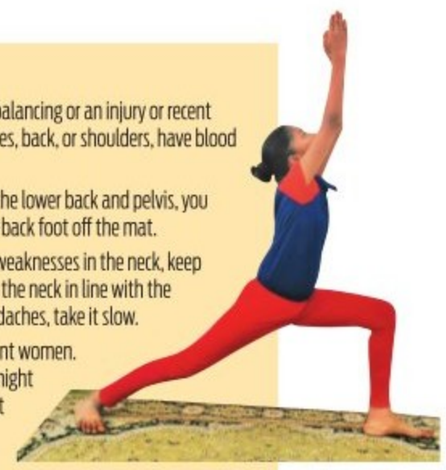
- Stand on the mat in Tadasana (Mountain Pose), separating the feet with a 3 to 4-foot distance between them.
- Ensure that heels are in the same line, and stand with heels touching the edge of the mat.
- Inhale and point the right toes towards the left foot. Exhale, align the left thigh parallel to the floor.
- Keeping the left knee is perpendicular to the left ankle, slide your right foot along the mat slightly tilted (30-45 degrees).
- Raise your arms are in line with the shoulders and align the arms parallel to the floor, palms facing down. Look at the left palm; this is Warrior 2 Pose.
- Inhale, raise your arms above the head and arms parallel to each other.
- Align the palms in Anjali Mudra and push the floor through the outer edge of your back foot for stability, balancing your weight equally between both feet.
- Lengthen your spine and lift your arms overhead aligned with your ears. Stay in the posture for 5 to 10 breaths.
- Keep the neck long and shoulders relaxed.
- Now, realign to Five Star Pointed Pose. Repeat the steps on the other side.
- Finally, come to Tadasana and relax in Three Part Mountain Pose.

BENEFITS

- Gives a deep stretch to the lower body.
- Helps maintain a toned muscles around the entire spine and the obliques.
- Activates organs related to the respiratory system, helping asthma patients.
- Helps improve air circulation in the body.
- Keeps nasal passage clear, reducing allergies.
- Helps in building stability and stamina, gaining self-confidence.
- Shoulders and neck get their share of stretch, reducing the stiffness.
- Improves the energy levels of the body.
- Improves digestive & reproductive systems.
- Reduces symptoms related to insomnia.
- Can be exciting additions for teens.

LIMITATIONS

- In case of difficulty in balancing or an injury or recent surgery to the hip, knees, back, or shoulders, have blood pressure, avoid this.
- If you feel pressure in the lower back and pelvis, you can lift the heel of the back foot off the mat.
- If you have injuries or weaknesses in the neck, keep the chin tucked in and the neck in line with the spine. Those with headaches, take it slow.
- A safe pose for pregnant women. The centre of gravity might shift. look forward, not at the palms, for stability.



By N Elumalai, PhD Scholar (Yoga Science) at Meenakshi Academy of Higher Education & Research, Chennai

EXPRESS CONNECT

HAVE A RECIPE OR ART WORK TO SHARE, OR A QUESTION TO ASK?

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CORRIGENDUM

This is to inform our readers that a city read on a skincare conclave, published on April 20, had erroneously included an unrelated image. The error is regretted.

WHAT WHEN WHY WHERE

Weekend Beats

Get ready for a sonic fiesta with Lunch Break India Tour by the dynamic hip-hop duo **Seedhe Maut - Calm and Encore ABJ**. Experience the hip-hop energy of their 30-track mixtape, including classics like *Namastute* and fresh hits like *Luka Chippy*.

When: April 27, 7pm onwards
Where: Forum South Bengaluru, Konanakunte
Details: zomato.com

Reader's Fest

Discover the best collection of books at this edition of Reader's Fest, celebrating Indian authors, featuring a varied collection of books, engaging contests, interactive storytelling, and exciting workshops.

When: Till April 27, 10am onwards **Where:** Lulu Mall Bengaluru, Rajajinagar
Details: bookmyshow.com

Pasta 101

Indulge in an immersive and educational journey into the world of pasta making at this workshop. Learn the secrets behind crafting perfect pasta from scratch, guided by culinary experts. The workshop will also delve into the history and cultural significance of pasta, exploring its diverse varieties.

When: April 22, 5pm
Where: Smallworld ST Bed, Koramangala
Details: bookmyshow.com

Comedy Night

Go for a night of laughter and good vibes with coffee, cupcakes, and crusty sandwiches while enjoying stand-up comedy with seasoned comics.

When: April 22, 7.30pm
Where: Glen's BakeHouse, Kalyan Nagar
Details: bookmyshow.com

Theatre Time

Watch *Yodhantarya*, a play showcasing the journey of a lone soldier on the battlefield, his triumphs, and the poignant reunion with his mother – a tale resonating with themes of anxiety, impermanence, and the enigmatic nature of life.

When: April 23, 7.30pm
Where: Ranga Shankara, JP Nagar
Details: bookmyshow.com

Musical Tribute

Experience the sensational musical tribute My name is Raj - Part 3, honouring the legendary Dr Rajkumar and celebrating his musical legacy with singer **Manojavvam Aatreya** and an exceptional team of musicians.

When: April 24, 6.30pm
Where: Chowdiah Memorial Hall, Malleswaram
Details: bookmyshow.com

Epic Night Out

Get ready for a super fun-filled ladies' night where you will enjoy unlimited drinks, all while grooving to amazing Bollywood beats!

When: April 23, 9pm
Where: Sunburn Union, Koramangala
Details: bookmyshow.com

Let's Shuffle!

Groove with shuffle dancing, a dynamic fusion of hip-hop and house moves, born from the streets and now viral on social media. Join this beginner-friendly class, where structured instruction and a supportive atmosphere ensure an enjoyable learning journey, regardless of your dance background.

When: April 28, 7pm
Where: Tuco Intelligent Experience Centre, Bellandur
Details: bookmyshow.com

ARTCORNER

LIFE IN VENICE

Artist Poonam Bhatnagar's cityscapes are interesting for her treatment—the angles of the buildings and her palette of soft monochromatic colours which imbue the city scenes with a different life

In an attempt to preserve the island's rich food culture, Tasha Marikkar curates aromatic dishes from the nook and corners of Sri Lanka

ON A LANKAN FOOD TRAIL

Book: Jaya Flava
Publisher: HarperCollins Publishers India
Pages: 266
Price: ₹1,499

ANUSHREE MADHAVAN

IN our adulting phase, living alone, managing expenses, and learning the daily grind of life, we have all missed our home-cooked comfort food at least once. We might have tried to replicate the recipe by taking guidance from our mothers or a cookbook. But what do you do when you don't have enough materials to walk you through to make your favourite dish? You write your own cookbook. That's what London-based Tasha Marikkar has done with *Jayaflava, A Celebration of Food, Flavour, and Recipes from Sri Lanka*.

The colourful, bright, hard-bound book works as an encyclopedia of our neighbouring country giving the reader an insight into the different communities and their cuisine. "I want people to take away one key thing: Sri Lanka is an ethnically diverse country, and our cuisine is rich and has been shaped by the many communities that live there. Despite our bad press in the last few decades, food has always been our great uniter," says Marikkar.

Excerpts follow:

■ Your first book on a cuisine close to your heart...
To say that I love Sri Lankan food would be an understatement; it became a passion for me while living in London and when I needed a recipe, there were no authentic recipes in any of the cookbooks I owned. I had a few cookbooks written by legendary 'Aunties' but their measurements are so hard to follow – some would refer to a 'mundu' of rice which is essentially an old can of condensed milk as a measure. These kinds of recipes are so open to interpretation, and it made it difficult to get a consistent outcome.

I also started to notice that a lot of people my age and younger in Sri Lanka did not know how to cook traditional food, and I knew, that if I did not try to record these recipes, the methods of cooking them would get lost over time. It became a personal mission, ensuring I preserved our key techniques and highlighted what made each recipe so special.

I had a lot of advertising jobs in London. There was one where I worked late nights and the only respite I had was coming home, cooking a comforting Lankan meal. It made me feel connected to my home and culture when I felt drained. Commuting after one long day, it hit me that all these recipes I was collecting should be shared.

■ Is Sri Lankan cuisine less explored compared to other South Asian countries?
Since the last decade, some light has been shone on Sri Lankan food, but not in the depth that it deserves. It is far less explored than other South Asian cuisines, and much less so when compared to South-east Asian and East Asian cuisines. It might be controversial, but the Sri Lankan hospitality industry doesn't fully understand the value of

the island's food; the flavour, the balance, and the health benefits are huge. If you want to eat a good Sri Lankan meal in the country, it's mostly in people's homes and Colombo. Very few restaurants celebrate our cuisine. This is the systematic reason that a cuisine that has centuries of heritage has been largely undiscovered. Sri Lankans themselves need to be bigger cheerleaders and shout about how amazing our food is. One of my goals with the book is to make every Lankan feel proud of our iconic dishes and empower everyone to take them across the world.

■ Tell us about the research.
This book took a long time to write, about four years. There were months where I would go watch different women cook and watch their techniques. What I learnt while writing the book was that a lot of our food heritage has been recorded as oral history, and that was a large challenge to overcome; I had to understand our colonial history as well as research from Robert Knox and the English interpretations of *Mahvamsa* to understand when and where our food was impacted. Different communities, like the Arab traders, the Javanese soldiers, and the Europeans (to name a few) have left an indelible mark on our cuisine, introducing their dishes and changing our food forever. It was a fascinating exploration into what makes Sri Lankans who we are today, as a people and a culture.

■ What is your first Sri Lankan food memory?
Probably my first food memory when it comes to Sri Lankan food was being hand-fed by my mother. She recalls feeding me rice and curry with lots of nutritious greens, and offal-like brain cutlets because it aided brain development. I started seriously cooking Sri Lankan food when I was 18, in my first year of University in London, and I finally realised how integral it was in my diet. That fuelled my passion for learning and cooking Sri Lankan food.

■ In your quest, have you come across forgotten dishes or unearthed long-lost recipes from the cuisine?
I could speak about this for ages. In fact, I am focusing my second book on the forgotten recipes in Sri Lanka. Many of my family members hail from the western coasts of the island, from a town called Puttalam and the food there is just unreal. I love to go there just to eat – they prepare sting-ray curry, catfish roe omelettes, and bone marrow curry like nowhere else in the country!

My uncle hails from a southern town where they make beef curry only once a season, and it is one of the tastiest things I have ever eaten! He layers a rich, slow-cooked curry with thin slices of daikon and daikon leaves, raw onion, and fluffy white rice; that's it. No additional dishes can be eaten with it other than a cucumber salad. You cannot get it anywhere else and only the Muslim community in Sri Lanka knows how to make it.

These dishes and the knowledge behind them are likely to get lost because there are very few people remaining who know how to prepare them and that is a scary reality to face.

■ Though the names differ, the recipes share a certain thread with the coastal regions of South India...
There are so many similarities between Southern Indian food and Sri Lankan food, that we are inextricably linked. So many of our most popular dishes are an evolution of Southern Indian food; *appam* and hoppers, *indiappam*, and string-hoppers – these are just a few examples. Sri Lankans have evolved these dishes over time and made them their own – our hopper is a deep-shaped bowl crispy *appam* whereas its Indian counterpart is shallower and hence the approach to getting the end result is different. I look at the similarities as a positive thing. It represents our long history together and how at the end of the day, we are all connected.

■ Tell us about your solutions to fight hunger in Sri Lanka.
Sri Lanka is faced with malnutrition on both extremes, wasting and obesity. It all starts with agriculture, and the way we produce needs to systematically change. This is a much bigger issue across the island and will take quite a few years to resolve; our production methods, and why we grow what are challenges the Government of Sri Lanka needs to face and help fix. The market is flooded with the same kind of vegetables every season, and that economically means the farmer earns poorly and that has a ripple effect throughout the country. These men and women are the backbone of our country, and they need to be helped and empowered, and that is one of my key missions.

The other trend that has gone out of fashion in Sri Lanka that I want to revitalise is growing food in your garden and foraging; when I was little, a lot of Sri Lankans grew nutritious greens, flowers, vegetables, and fruits in their gardens or a shared plot of land. Every family and neighbourhood would share their excess crops. This does not tax our soil and provides us with free food, and this is lost art that needs to be turbocharged again.

Furthermore, it seems like fast food is becoming more and more popular and I think that there is no place for it in Sri Lanka. So I want to make eating fresh, home-cooked meals as the coolest way to eat.

■ As an unofficial ambassador of Sri Lankan cuisine, how do you plan to popularise the recipes, apart from the book?
There are a few projects in the pipeline that I am not at liberty to speak of yet, but the book is the main vehicle. I find spending time with people and starting showcase food events sparks the conversation, so that's an area I would like to focus on. I want to invest in the Sri Lankan hospitality industry to get them to start building the cuisine across the island and work with women and men in smaller towns and villages to help them bring their food dreams to life. The more that Sri Lankan food wins, the more Sri Lankan people win.

Tasha Marikkar

Red Chicken Curry

INGREDIENTS

MARINADE FOR THE CHICKEN

- 500g **bone-in chicken thighs** (or **whole chicken** pieces cut up), skin on
- 2 tsps **red chilli powder**
- 1 tsp **unroasted curry powder,** ½ tsp **turmeric powder,** ½ tsp **salt**
- 20g **tamarind** or 1½ tsps **tamarind paste**
- 360ml thin **coconut mylk** (if tinned, 240ml coconut mylk diluted with 120ml water)
- 2 tbsps **coconut oil**
- 1 small **red onion**, diced
- 10 **curry leaves**
- ½ **stem lemongrass**, lightly pounded with the back of a knife,
- 5cm piece of a **pandan leaf,** 1 tsp **mustard seeds,** ½ **cinnamon quill,** 1 tsp **fenugreek seeds**
- 20g **garlic** and 20g fresh **ginger**, pound to make a paste, 3 **cloves**
- 2 **cardamoms**, pounded
- 1 fresh **green chilli**, diced, 1½ tsps **red chilli** powder
- 120ml **thick coconut mylk**

METHOD

In a bowl, add the chicken, red chilli powder, curry powder, turmeric powder, and salt. Massage the spices into the chicken and marinate for 10 minutes.

Mix the tamarind pieces in the thick coconut mylk. Strain and set aside. If using tamarind paste, simply mix into the coconut mylk, ensuring all of it is dissolved.

In a deep saucepan with a lid or a Dutch oven, heat the coconut oil over a medium fire. Add the red onion, curry leaves, lemongrass, pandan leaf, mustard seeds, cinnamon quill and fenugreek seeds. Fry for two minutes before adding ginger-garlic paste, cloves, cardamoms and fresh green chilli. Cook for a further 2-3 minutes, before adding the chicken.

Sauté the chicken pieces until it turns golden brown. Pour in the thin coconut mylk and cook covered for 20 minutes.

In a small pan, roast the additional 1 ½ teaspoons of red chilli powder for 1 minute or until it turns a little darker. Quickly add the roasted chilli powder into the chicken curry and mix well. This brings the 'red' colour to the chicken curry. Cook covered for 5 minutes.

Next, add in the thick coconut mylk and mix well. Cook covered for a further 15 minutes on a low heat until a beautiful red gravy has formed and the chicken is cooked through.

Tip: If you want a redder curry, stir in 1 teaspoon of tomato paste into the curry when you mix in the thick coconut mylk.

Jackfruit (Polos) Curry

INGREDIENTS

For the curry powder

- 15 **dried red chillies**
- 15 **cloves,** 6 **cardamoms**
- 1 **cinnamon quill** (5g)
- 1 levelled tsp **pepper**
- 2 levelled tbsps **coriander seeds**
- 1 levelled tbsp **cumin seeds**

For the rest of the curry

- ½ tsp **turmeric powder**/paste
- 2 tsps **salt,** 500g **young jackfruit**, cleaned and cut into large equal size pieces
- 2tbsps **coconut oil**
- 50g **red onion** (½ onion), cut as half moons
- 4 large **garlic cloves** (30g), chopped, 8g **goraka fruit**
- 2 fresh **green chillies**, chopped into large pieces
- 4X7cm piece of **pandan leaf**
- 20 **curry leaves** (5g)
- ½ tsp **fenugreek seeds**
- ½ tsp **mustard seeds**
- 500ml **thin coconut mylk** (250ml canned coconut **mylk**, 250ml water mix)
- 530ml thick **coconut mylk**

METHOD

Heat a frying pan over a high fire, and roast the curry powder ingredients for 3-4 minutes. Once browned, remove the spices from the heat immediately and set aside. Cool for a few minutes and grind into a fine powder. Set aside.

Combine the turmeric, 1 teaspoon salt and the young jackfruit pieces in a bowl, making sure to coat each piece thoroughly. Set aside.

In a deep saucepan, heat the coconut oil over a medium heat. Add the onion, chopped garlic, goraka, fresh green chillies, pandan leaves, curry leaves, and fry for 3-4 minutes. Stir in the fenugreek and mustard seeds, and fry for another 2 minutes.

Mix in the seasoned young jackfruit, and fry for 4 minutes, making sure to brown it on all sides. Add in 4 heaped tsps curry powder (reserve the spare for later) and fry further for 3 minutes. Stir in the thin coconut mylk. Cover and cook for five minutes, then tip in ¾ of the thick coconut mylk and stir well.

Allow the curry to come to boil (approximately 5-7 minutes), then turn down the heat to low and cook covered for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in 180ml thick coconut mylk and cook for 30 minutes on low with the lid covered. Add in 2 heaped teaspoons of the curry powder, 1 teaspoon of salt and mix well. Cook covered for another 10 minutes on low until you have a reduced, thick, dark brown curry.

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS **CLASSIFIEDS**

PUBLIC NOTICE

CHANGE OF NAME

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **AKSHATHA L.** aged 32 years, W/o. **Anil Ranganna,** residing of No. 17, 1st Main Road, Meenakshinagar, Kamakshipalya, Bengaluru-560079, have changed my name from **AKSHATHA ANIL KUMAR** to **AKSHATHA L.** vide affidavit dated: 17-04-2024 sworn before Notary **H.S. SAKALESH ARADHYA,** BENGALURU.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, Mohammed Muneer S/o. Mohammed Haneef residing at No.216, C cross, Bala Bagath Manegalu, Devara Jeevanahalli Banalore-560045, Karnataka, India, have changed name from **MUNEER** to **MOHAMMED MUNEER** vide affidavit dated 20-04-2024sworn before notary G B Turamari, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **ASHIWINI K.V,** W/o Aravind P, age 47 years, R/at # 21, 1st Floor, 5th Main Road, J C Nagar, Kurubarahalli, near Thomos Building, Benglauru-560 086 do hereby declare that both the names i.e. **ASHIWINI ARVIND @ ASHIWINI K.V.** are one and the same and refers to me only, vide affidavit dated 20th April 2024, sworn before Advocate and Notary **PRAKASHA .C** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, MOHAMMED RAFEEQ S/o Late Gudusab Aged about 66 years, Residing at NO.62, 1ST CROSS, MUSLIM COLONY, BYRASANDRA, JAYANAGAR, 3RD BLOCK, BENGALURU- 560011, have changed my name from **RAFEEQ AHMED** to **MOHAMMED RAFEEQ,** vide affidavit dated 18/4/2024 sworn to before S.I.Balaguru advocate and notary Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **MEGHA H M**, D/o Hanumanth Melligeri, residing at No.3, Mathru Nilaya, G Krishna Murthy Layout, Near Raghavendra Matt, Doddabommasandra, Vidyaranyapura, Bangalore - 560 097, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **MEGHA** to **MEGHA H M**, Henceforth, I shall be known and called as **MEGHA H M** only, vide affidavit dated 20/04/2024 sworn before advocate and notary R Ramesh, at Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **AKHILA .A**, D/o. Arjun .C, aged about 36 years, residing at No. 2, 1st Main, Sudhamanagar, Bangalore North, New Thippasanndra, Bangalore North, Karnataka-560075, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **AKILA ARJUN** to **AKHILA .A,** hereinafter I shall be known and called as **AKHILA .A** only, vide affidavit dated 20.04.2024, sworn to before Prakasha .C, Advocate & Notary, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, ESWAR RAO, S/o. K. Joga Rao, Resident of No. 70/A, 3rd Main, 1st Phase, Near Navrang Bridge, West of Chord Road, Rajajinagar, Bengaluru-560010, have changed my name to **KUTTUM ESWAR RAO** vide affidavit dated: 20.04.2024 before notary GANGARAJU .B.N., Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **ANIL RANGANNA,** aged 43 years, S/o. Ranganna K. residing of No. E/15/17, 1st Main Road, Meenakshinagar, Kamakshipalya, Bengaluru-560079, have changed my name from **ANIL KUMAR RANGANNA** to **ANIL RANGANNA** vide affidavit dated 17-04-2024 sworn before Notary **H.S. SAKALESH ARADHYA,** BENGALURU.

AFFIDAVIT
I, **Mr. KISHOR K.P,** S/o K.P.R. Guptha, age 45 years, R/at No. 73/16, 3rd 'A' Cross, Iyanna Setty Layout, Mysore Road, Near Byatarayanapura Police Station, Bengaluru-560 026 do hereby declare that both the names i.e. **KISHOR .K.P** and **KISHORE KAAKARLA PATTABI** are one and the same and refers to me only, henceforth I shall be known and called as **KISHORE KAAKARLA PATTABI** for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 19th April 2024, sworn before Advocate and Notary **DEEPA .M** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **ADITI TIWARI,** W/o Siddartha Chatterji, aged 33 years, residing at Villa Suryalaya, Taralaya Road, Siddapura, Ramagondanahalli,Bengaluru-560066 have changed my name to **ADITI T CHATTERJI**, vide affidavit dt. 19/04/2024 before Notary **S.I. BALAGURU,** Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, Soumya Tunga, S/o Dr. Rashbehari Tunga, aged about 23 years, residing at Flat No. K-2004, Purva Highland, Off. Kanakapura Road, Mallasandra, Thalaghattapura, Bangalore South, Bangalore, Karnataka-560062, have changed my name from **Soumya Tunga Shrivastava, S/o Dr. Rashbehari Tunga** to **Soumya Tunga S/o Dr. Rashbehari Tunga,** vide affidavit dated 16/4/2024 sworn to before K.G.Rajpal advocate and notary Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **MEGHANA,** D/o. Divakara Rao, aged about 25 years, residing at House No. 305-A, A Wing, Venkatalaxmi Residency Apartment, Hangaluru Village, Kundapura Taluk, Udupi District, Karnataka-576217, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **MEGHANA** to **MEGHANA DIVAKARA RAO**, vide affidavit dated 20.04.2024, sworn to before Ravi Kumar .V, Advocate & Notary Public, Govt. of India, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **SYED FAYAZ,** residing at No. 404/B, 5th Main Road, 13th Cross, Ilyas Nagar, J.P. Nagar, Bangalore-560078, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **SYED FAYAZ QUDDUS** (Old Name) to **SYED FAYAZ** (New Name), vide affidavit dated 20.04.2024, sworn to before Ramachandrappa .C, Advocate & Notary Public, Govt. of India, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, ANITA PASRICHA, Resident of No. 3A, Regency Residences, 24 Resthouse Crescent, Bengaluru-560001, have changed my name to **ANITA BAVEJA,** vide affidavit dated: 20.04.2024 before notary ARAVIND PATIL .G.G., Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, ELIZABETH JOY, W/o Joy Joseph, and D/o Mr. Theckaneth Ittiara Paul, age 65 Years, R/o House No.11/1, 1st Floor, Prakruthi Layout, Behind Kanshiram Nagar Bus Stop, Hesarghatta Main Road, Vidyaranyapura Post, Bangalore-560097, has changed my name from ELIZABETH JOY to ELIZABETH JOY LIGY vide Affidavit dated 19th April 2024, Sworn before Notary Smt.Vatsala, Advocate & Notary Public, Bengaluru

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **ARIHANT JAIN,** S/o Mr. Mahendra Kumar Jain, R/o Flat No. B1514, Windsor Troika, Surakshanaar, Yelenahalli, Begur Koppa Road, Akshayanagar, Bangalore-560 068 do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **ARIHANT KUMAR JAIN** to **ARIHANT JAIN**, henceforth I shall be known and called as **ARIHANT JAIN** for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 19th April 2024, sworn before Advocate and Notary **MOHAMMED HUSSAIN** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **SACHETANA,** S/o UDAY NASIK, R/at No. 1966, T G ROAD,HANAGAL, HAVERI-581104 KARANATAKA, INDIA, have changed my name to **SACHETAN NASIK**, vide affidavit dated: 20.04.2024,before Notary **S.L.Balaguru,** Bengaluru,

CHANGE OF NAME
I, DAKSHITA NARULA, W/o Gaurav Dua, aged about 32 years, Presently Residing at: No.74, Prestige Woodside, Yelahanka Newtown, Avalahalli, Bengaluru-560064, have changed my name from **DAKSHITA DUA** to **DAKSHITA NARULA,** vide affidavit dated 20/4/2024 sworn to before S.R. Ravikumar advocate and notary Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **SWAPNA HARSHIT TAILOR,** D/o. Prabhakaran Nair, aged about 43 years, residing at No. 60, 1st Floor, 15th Main, HAL 2nd Stage, Indiranagar, Next to Sai Vista Apartments, Bengaluru-560008, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **SWAPNA HARSHIT TAILOR** to **SWAPNA PRABHAKARAN NAIR,** hereinafter I shall be known and called as **SWAPNA PRABHAKARAN NAIR**, vide affidavit dated 20.04.2024, sworn to before M. Rajendra, Advocate & Notary Public, Govt. of India, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **VINOD SHAMJI PATEL (New Name),** S/o. Shamji Ratanshi Patel, residing at No. 360, 4th Cross, 5th Main, VBHCS, Sachinananda Nagar, R.R.Nagar, Bangalore-560098, Karnataka, India, that I have changed my name from **PATEL VINODKUMAR SHAMJI (Old Name)** to **VINOD SHAMJI PATEL (New Name),** henceforth I shall be known and called **VINOD SHAMJI PATEL (New Name)** only for all purpose, vide Affidavit dated: 20/04/2024, before Notary MOHAMMED HUSSAIN.K, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **SHREEDHAR MALLIKARJUN GANACHARI** aged about 32 years, S/o Sri. Mallikarjun Ganachari and Smt. Lalita Ganachari, presently residing at No.198, Ground Floor, 6th Cross, 5th 'A' Main Road, Hampinagar, RPC Layout, Vijayanagar 2nd Stage, Bengaluru-560104, Karnataka, India, do hereby solemnly declare that I have changed my name from **GANACHARI SANDIP SHREEDHAR MALLIKARJUN** to **SHREEDHAR MALLIKARJUN GANACHARI**, vide affidavit dated 20.04.2024 sworn to before Advocate and Notary **Deepa .M**, Bengaluru.

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The makers of TS Nagabharana's *Nadaprabhu Kempegowda*, which stars Daali Dhananjay in the lead role, have obtained an injunction against their film

DHARMABHEERU NADAPRABHU KEMPEGOWDA FACES TROUBLE BEFORE ENTERING PRODUCTION

A SHARADHAA

THE upcoming film *Dharmabheeru Nadaprabhu Kempegowda* has found itself embroiled in a legal dispute. Apparently, TS Nagabharna holds exclusive rights to the title *Nadaprabhu Kempegowda,* they have roped in Daali Dhananjay in the titular role of Kempegowda. With preparations for filming well underway, the project just began, until legal complications arose.

By virtue of the interim order dated 18/04/2024 in OS 2708/2024 passed by the City Civil and Sessions Court, Bangalore, Kiran Thotambyle, Chetan Raj, Dhamendra Kumar Arehalli, and director Dinesh Baboo, agents, and associated representative and all other personas spokespersons, and all other persons acting on their behalf are temporarily restrained from producing, broadcasting, disseminating, distributing, advertising, publishing, directing, or in any other manner making public, promoting, or undertaking any activities related to the film titled *Dharmabheeru Nadaprabhu Kempegowda* or any subject matter thereof.

The production rights holders of *Nadaprabhu Kempegowda,* TS Nagabharana and producer Dr MN Shivaprasad, and Rahul Gundala, have also filed a lawsuit with the Karnataka Film Chamber of Commerce, seeking a permanent injunction, trademark, title, brand, pre-conceived and post-conceived rights, and any other intellectual property rights that may infringe the proposed film *Dharmabheeru Nadaprabhu Kempegowda,* and have initiated proceedings in the City Civil and Sessions Court, Bangalore.

Meanwhile, Kiran Thotambyle is working diligently to remove the temporary stay order obtained by Director Nagabharana and his team. As they await the court proceedings, Thotambyle is also focusing on planning to kickstart the process. Originally scheduled to begin on June 27, coinciding with Kempe-Gowda Jayanthi, the film's production has been temporarily halted due to these legal complications.

Indrajit Lankesh shares his thoughts on the upcoming film *Max*, and reveals that certain scenes reminded him of Sudeep in Kempe Gowda

Max is shaping up to be an action feast for Sudeep's fans

CE FEATURES

INDRAJIT Lankesh remarks, "*Max* will be an action feast for Sudeep's fans." The *Gowri* director, during his recent visit to Mahabalipuram, where the multilingual actor is currently shooting for *Max*, had the privilege of seeing the showreel of the film. As one of the few who witnessed the early footage, Indrajith Lankesh shared his thoughts and excitement about the project.

Indrajit Lankesh says the film has the potential to captivate audiences with its high-octane sequences and intense performances. Speaking about the showreel, he highlighted certain clips, particularly the action bits, and mentioned that Sudeep's attitude and body language evoked memories of the actor's iconic roles in films like *Huchcha* and *Kempe Gowda*. "These elements are among the highlights of Sudeep's performance in *Max*," Indrajith explained, indicating that the film is shaping up to be a true crowd-pleaser. The two, who are good friends, also got to reminisce about their good old days.

As *Max,* directed by debutant Vijay Karthikeyan, enters its final phase of shooting, Sudeep is currently involved in major action sequences, followed by patchwork, with plans to wrap up production soon. Sudeep, known for his portrayals of cop roles in films like *Vikrant Rona, Varadanayaka, Veera Madakari*, and *Kempe Gowda,* to name a few, will once again don the role of an inspector in Max.

Produced by Kalaippuli S Thanu's V Creations, Max features Varalaxmi Sarathkumar, marking her reunion with Sudeep after their collaboration in *Maanikya*. The film also stars Samyuktha Hornad, Sukratha Wagle, and Anirudh Bhat in pivotal roles.

With Shivakumar as the art director, Ajaneesh B Loknath composing the music, and Shekar Chandra serving as the cinematographer, *Max* promises to be an exciting venture for fans of action-packed cinema. Apart from this, Sudeep is also working on a film with director Cheran, and the much-anticipated project *Billa Ranga Baasshaa,* directed by Anup Bhandari.

Indrajith Lankesh and Sudeep

The Darkness Outside Us gets a film adaptation

CE FEATURES

AUTHOR Eliot Schrefer's sci-fi novel, *The Darkness Outside Us,* is being adapted into a feature film. Oscar-nominated actor Elliot Page's Pageboy Productions is developing the upcoming film, which revolves around the romance between two young men from enemy countries, who are stationed in the same space craft, which is being launched on a rescue mission.

Pageboy Productions have previously developed films like Close to You, which stars Elliot Page, and Backspot, which premiered at the Toronto Film Festival. The makers are yet to reveal details regarding the cast and crew. On the other hand, author Schrefer is all set to release a sequel to her book. Titled *The Brightness Between Us*, the book is currently scheduled to be released in October.

Page, who is best known for films like Juno and Inception, will next be seen in a voice-acting role alongside Vin Diesel and Russel Crowe, in *Ark: The Animated Series.*

Afzal to make his directorial debut with *Hosathara*

The actor-turned-director will also play the lead role, alongside Brahma

CE FEATURES

AFZAL, known for his journey from journalism to acting and his recent venture into film production with *VIP,* is now stepping into the director's role with his upcoming project, *Hosathara*. Not limiting himself to direction, Afzal has also penned the story and screenplay for the film. Additionally, he will play the lead role alongside Brahma, who is also part of the principal cast.

Produced under the banner of Jai Vijay Productions, *Hosathara* marked their first production venture. The film promises to offer a fresh narrative infused with elements of love, suspense, thriller, and a sprinkle of comedy. The pre-production phase has just commenced, with plans to feature three melodious songs, with music composed by Raju Emmiganuru and background score by Anthony Poyanoo. Action stunts will be composed by Ultimate Shivu. The makers have roped in Rajeev Ganeshan as the cinematographer, with Sukkku choreographing the dance sequences.

Incorporating cutting-edge technology, the makers have collaborated with JHJ Studios in America for VFX. Afzal, who has brought in a set of skilled technicians for the project, plans to reveal the rest of the cast and crew in the upcoming days.

On the sets of Just Married

CR Bobby's directorial debut, *Just Married*, wraps shoot

CE FEATURES

SHINE Shetty and Ankita Amar's starrer, *Just Married,* has wrapped up shooting. The romantic drama, starring an ensemble cast including Devaraj, Shruthi Krishna, Anup Bhandari, Shriman, Ravi Shankar Gowda, Ravi Bhat, Sakshi Agarwal, Shruthi Hariharan, and Achyuth Kumar in pivotal roles, was shot over a twenty-day schedule in Bengaluru, Mysuru, and Chickmangaluru. Post-production work is currently underway.

With *Just Married,* Ajaneesh Loknath and CR Bobby, known for their contributions to popular Kannada films, are venturing into production for the first time. The upcoming film, made under ABBS Studios banner, also marks Bobby's directorial debut. *Just Married* will have Ajaneesh taking on the additional role of music director and will feature six songs, including the track 'Abhimaani Agi Hodge,' with lyrics penned by Pramod Maravante and vocals by Vijay Prakash, which was recently released.

The story of *Just Married* is penned by CR Bobby. She also co-wrote the screenplay along with Dhananjay. The film's dialogues are penned by Raghu Niduvalli.

PG (Parthiban) and Ashik Kusugol are handling the cinematography, with Amar overseeing the art direction, and stunt choreography is being handled by Vikram Mor, Sahas, Baba Bhaskar, and Shanthi Aravind.

A still from the film